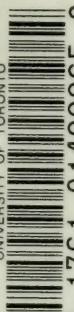



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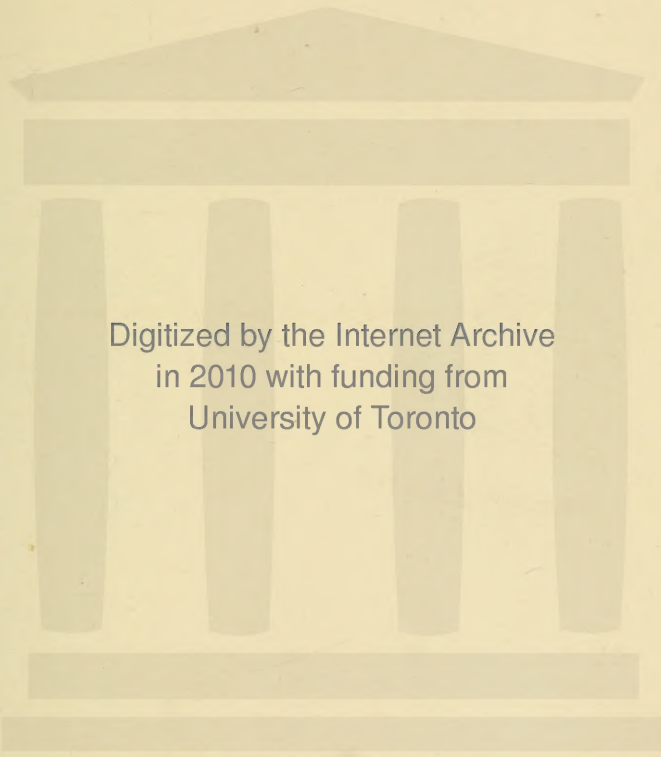
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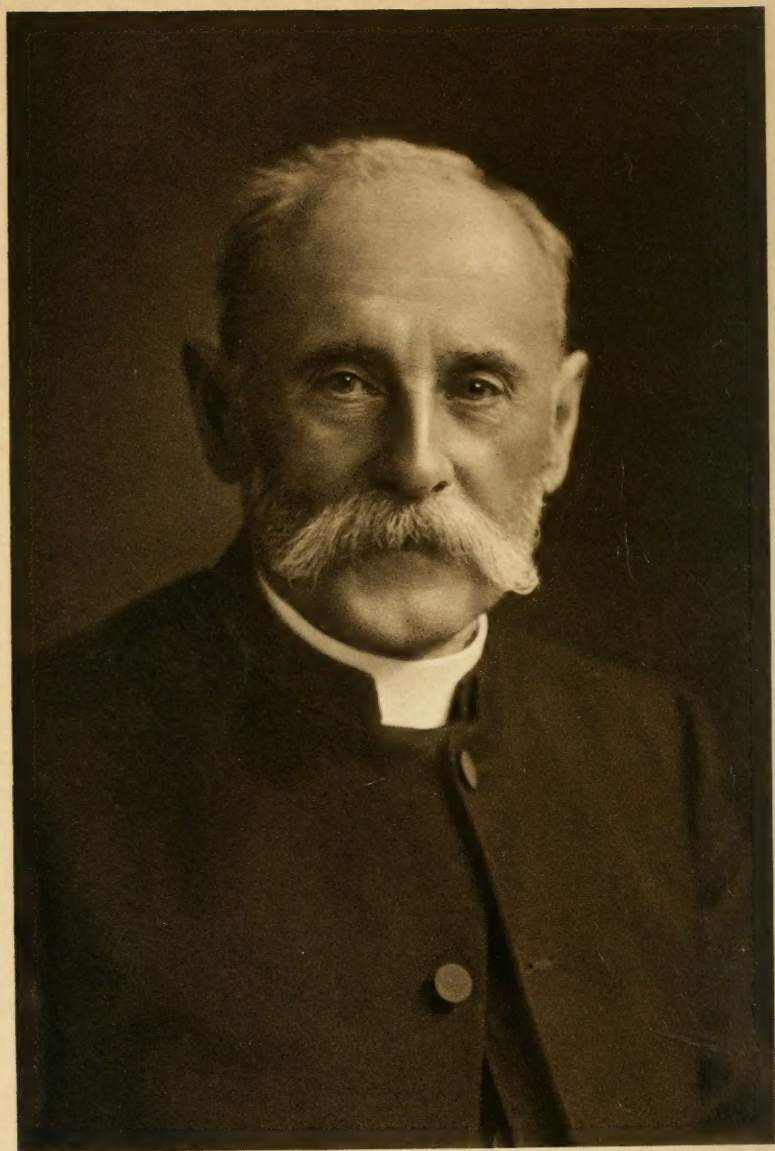
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As a Tale that is Told

Recollections of Many Years

By

Frederic W. Macdonald

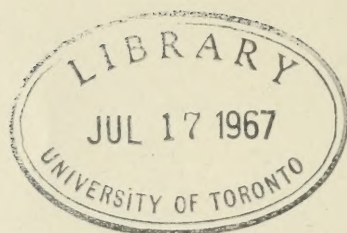
Minister of the Wesleyan Methodist Church and sometime
President of the Conference



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1919



To
MY SISTERS

GEORGIANA, LADY BURNE-JONES
LOUISA, MRS. ALFRED BALDWIN
AND
EDITH MACDONALD

AND TO THE DEAR MEMORY OF
ALICE, MRS. JOHN L. KIPLING
AND
AGNES, LADY POYNTER

3 Dedicate

THESE RECOLLECTIONS OF OUR PARENTS
AND OUR EARLY LIFE TOGETHER
AND OF MY SUBSEQUENT WORK AND
WANDERINGS.

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As a Tale that is Told

CHAPTER I

1842-1850

My Ancestry—My Parents—The Home of My Childhood—Sisters of Mine.

THE proper introduction to any record of my life must be a brief mention of my grandfather, James Macdonald. Though he died some years before I was born, I can hardly persuade myself that I did not know him; for the tradition of him ran strong in the life and conversation of my father, and I was nourished on it from early days. I regard him, not merely as a pious ancestor, but as the founder of our family, as the head and parent from whom I and those who are nearest to me derive. Doubtless we are descended in unbroken line from Adam, but in James Macdonald my ancestry first becomes visible, emerging from Scottish mists into the light of common day. When the Highland clans were broken up after the rebellion of 1745 and the crushing defeat on Culloden Moor, great numbers of clansmen whose accustomed world had gone to pieces left Scotland and sought homes elsewhere, most of them in the British Colonies across the Atlantic, and others in the North of Ireland. Amongst the latter were my grandfather's parents, who settled near Enniskillen, where James

Macdonald was born in June, 1761. Of his early days very little is known. In one of his letters he says : " My father and mother regularly attended Divine Service in the parish church, and received the Holy Sacrament. I remember, as early as I can recollect anything, that they were anxious to teach me and the rest of their children to repeat the Lord's Prayer and the Creed, and to answer such questions as ' Who made you ? ' ' Who redeemed you ? ' etc."

During my grandfather's youth Wesley frequently visited Ireland, and his labours and those of his preachers had great result in the religious awakening of the people. The Macdonalds became members of the Methodist Society, and in the year 1784, on the direct invitation of Wesley, James Macdonald entered the Methodist ministry, and for eleven years laboured in the north of Ireland. Constant privation and frequent peril were his lot, but they neither depressed nor soured his spirit. His intellectual and his religious life were alike sane and strong, and under the hard discipline of his calling his whole nature was developed. It was then that he laid the foundations of the scholarship which he cultivated to the close of life. By great self-denial and strict economy of time, amidst constant journeyings on foot and on horseback through the wide circuits to which he was appointed, without teachers or companions in learning, his pursuit of knowledge was such as would have done credit to a student with all opportunities and appliances at his command. He became a good Latin scholar, and learnt enough Greek and Hebrew to read the Scriptures in the original tongues and

to profit by the best critical and exegetical writers. He acquired an excellent knowledge of French, and could read Italian and Spanish. The great English divines, Anglican and Puritan, were his masters in divinity, and the philosophers, essayists, and poets furnished him with unfailing recreation amid the toils and privations of a Methodist preacher's life a hundred years ago. In 1795 he was removed to England, where the rest of his life and ministry were spent, and died in Gosport, October 18th, 1835.

In his letters, of which many are in my possession, and in notebooks and manuscripts of various kinds in which he was accustomed to express his thoughts with no other object than the pleasure of doing so, the self-portraiture of the writer, though unconscious, is complete. He was essentially an intellectual man and a student, refined in his tastes, and disliking everything that was hasty, crude, and unbalanced in thought, or irreverent in spirit. His piety was of a fine type, intelligent, manly, and strong. He hated religious affectations and exaggerations, loved what was good wherever he found it, was tolerant in judgment, sympathetic in spirit, and rich in saving common sense. He had also a quick sense of humour, was cheerful in temperament, and distinguished for his conversational powers.

The grandfather whom I never saw has always been more than a name to me. His personality has been real and vivid to my apprehension. His presence is one of those that have accompanied me in the journey of life, and it has counted for much with me. I have his portrait where I can

look upon it day by day, and love to commune with the brave old grandfather whose ministry, begun a hundred and thirty-five years ago, has been continued by his son and grandson until now.

The home of my childhood, as it now seems to me looking back upon it, lacked but one thing. It had no fixed local habitation, but was moved from place to place at short and regularly recurring intervals. My father, like his father before him, was a Wesleyan minister, and spent his life in that itinerancy which was and is an essential part of the Methodist system, which I also accepted when my time came. Of its merits and demerits as an institution I think I know all that can be said, and shall not now discuss them. There is, however, a personal and domestic side of it as regards ministers' families that is seldom referred to. One result of the itinerant life their fathers lead is that their sons and daughters grow up with the least possible amount of local feeling and attachment. They do not remain long enough in a place for these to be developed. Their surroundings are changed before they have time to gain much hold upon their lives. Associations both local and personal are snapped off short, and they have to begin again elsewhere with others which may or may not be of a better kind, but in any case there is change and not continuity in life's setting. I think it probable that this stimulates intelligence, and produces a certain alertness of mind which is good, together with a self-confidence and a somewhat premature cosmopolitanism that are not so good. A removal, say, from York to Birmingham, or from Ipswich to Ludlow, may set the younger

members of the family upon instituting comparisons, and criticising persons and things with a freedom that would astonish those concerned if they could hear it. The minister himself has little difficulty in taking up the threads of his work in a new circuit, so uniform are the main features of his duty wherever he may be appointed ; but it is otherwise with his children, and there is often a stage in their life when such a removal is little short of a calamity, producing a distress and even rebellion of mind of which their elders are not always aware. On this subject I write what I know.

Against this, however, it may be claimed as a set-off that such an itinerant life has a tendency to throw a family upon itself and its own resources, and I think it was so with us. The frequent change of residence, and the interruption of local interests and associations, helped to give compactness to our family life by developing intimacy and fellow-feeling amongst ourselves. Though our home was, as we learnt to call it, a "moving tent," the life that it contained was all the more close-knit for the shifting scenes amid which it was pitched. With some differences of temperament among us, there were characteristics that we all shared—sentiments, ways of looking at things, humours, and modes of expression that were common to us all, and still cleave to those of us who survive.

A highly developed family-life is not perhaps without its dangers. It may lead to insufficient sympathy with persons and things outside itself, and may strengthen mental habits and tendencies that do not need to be strengthened, but rather

to be toned and modified by freer intercourse with others. In their love and admiration for each other the members of a family may come to think more highly of their common gifts and qualities than is altogether good for them, and to undervalue some other qualities which it would not be amiss for them to cultivate. To what extent I and those dear to me have suffered in these respects I cannot say; but on the other hand I am persuaded there has been a large amount of happiness for us in after years drawn from our affectionate clannishness when we were young. The first change of residence that I can remember was from Wakefield to Huddersfield, when I was five years old. From that time to the day when I left my father's home to enter upon a similar itinerant life of my own, and for nineteen years afterwards, when my mode of life became more settled, I never lived in one place for more than three years. Truly I may say, *Peregrinus, sicut omnes patres mei*—"I am a stranger as all my fathers were."

I was born in Leeds, on February 25th, 1842, being the second son, and fifth child then living, of George Browne Macdonald, Wesleyan minister, and Hannah his wife.

The earliest date that I can distinctly recall is that of my fourth birthday. Vague remembrances of a still earlier time occasionally haunt my mind, but when I try to fix them they are gone, shadowy recollections that refuse to take shape. But that golden birthday morning stands out clear and bright. I had risen with a vague sense of pleasure and expectancy, and had gone into the warm Yorkshire kitchen to receive the

congratulations of the maids who were preparing breakfast. I remember standing with my back to the fire, looking out upon life with large thoughts, and desirous that the fact that I was now four years old should be appreciated by others as well as by myself, when my father, who was in search of me, found me there. With an impressiveness befitting the occasion he wished me "many happy returns of the day," and repeated in his best manner the lines :

Blest be the star that gilds the morn
Of this auspicious day.

This was well enough, and I was pleased ; but I waited—not unworthily, I hope—I waited to see if anything was to follow these good words, and I soon saw that there was. With great deliberation my father searched his pockets, and at length produced a new penny, fresh, radiant, unsullied as yet by base uses, the fitting symbol, not of filthy lucre, but of lucre at its cleanest and best. Taking my hand in his, he solemnly laid the penny in my now itching palm, and closing my fingers upon it, said : " There, my son, as long as you keep this penny *you will never be without money!* " I enjoyed a brief period of glory in the possession of this enchanted and enchanting penny, until, with the growth of the rationalising spirit in me, the meaning of my father's words broke upon me. And this is what I said to myself, " As long as I keep this penny I shall have a penny, that is all " ; so I spent my penny, and never again have known what it felt like to be a millionaire.

At the time of which I write we were living at

Wakefield, occupying the Minister's house close by West Parade Chapel, father, mother, and seven children. My father, then in his forty-first year, was in the fullness of mental and physical vigour, distinguished by a handsome presence, a fine voice and noble elocution, a large-hearted, broad-minded man and minister.

His genial disposition and admirable social qualities made him generally beloved in private life, and his public ministry was one of the most popular and effective of his time. He was the supreme object of my childish admiration, and I thought no one was ever so wise and good as he was. In the house his authority was unquestioned, needing no penalties to enforce it; in the study he was approachable and kind, though sometimes a little absent-minded; and in the parlour, as we then called it, he was delightful. He had an excellent fund of humour, and was a prince of storytellers. I loved to be in his company, and most of all when I could have it to myself. To go with him for a walk was at all times a privilege that I prized, even when it was taken before breakfast, or when in later years it became a time for testing my memory in the Latin Grammar, the Roman Emperors, the Kings of England, and the like. We both enjoyed these pleasant gymnastics. My memory was then in very good trim, and one of the early burdens it was taught to carry was the Eton Latin Grammar, whose *Propria quæ maribus*, and *As in presenti* I could repeat without a hitch.

Of my mother I cannot write without deep and tender feeling. All that the name of mother stands for seemed to be realised in her. Hers was maternal

love that knew no petulance or impatience, a wise, calm, and constant love, not finding expression in passionate language or impulsive action, but spending itself in ceaseless care for us, in sympathy and in helpfulness. Along with it was a rare intelligence and insight. She had further the charm that beauty of person and refinement of mind can give, and a gentle dignity of manner that inspired both affection and respect. We were happy boys and girls who grew up under the shadow of such a father, by the side of such a mother.

The Methodists of sixty or seventy years ago are sometimes spoken of as strait-laced, narrow-minded, Pharisaic, and the like. My memory recalls nothing in the home of my childhood that could be so described. The atmosphere of the house was genial, and the intercourse between parents and children free and happy. Our pleasures were simple ones, and our appetite for such was not overfed. To be invited out to tea, or to make an excursion into the country, was the top note in the scale of our dissipations. There was some wit and a good deal of humour among us, and abundant room for their exercise. We were surrounded by books, and any censorship that was exercised over our reading was of the mildest. Only once or twice do I remember a book on which some one had laid unlicensed hands being gently taken away. Magazines and light literature were not unknown among us. "Chambers' Journal," "The London Journal," "The Home Circle," an occasional number of "Blackwood's Magazine," and sundry volumes of "Constable's Miscellany," helped to balance the heavier metal from my

father's shelves, and provide recreation for children each of whom was a reader, and our parents were glad to have it so. My sisters, inheriting their mother's gift, were all musical, and our well-worn pianoforte had still a melodious heart within its ancient frame, and did its best under their young hands.

Our religious training had nothing of the formal or laboured about it. Family worship, conducted by my father, or in his absence by my mother, was part of the daily routine ; and I do not know which memory is to me the more affecting, the rich full tones of my father as he read the scriptures and offered prayer, or my mother's sweet and gentle voice as we sat around her or knelt at her side. During the long years since then I have seen much of family life in many lands, amongst rich and poor, but I have met with none that I think more wholesome and happy than that which I shared in my childhood, while our parents were yet with us, and their sons and daughters had not set out upon their separate voyages. We have travelled far since then,

But O blithe breeze, and O great seas,
Together lead us home at last.

It will be readily believed that our household life was a frugal one, based upon a very modest income. I have in my possession an account-book in which for many years my father made careful entry of his income and expenditure. On the blank leaf at the beginning is written in full the passage from the book of Proverbs : " Honour the Lord with thy substance, and with the first-

fruits of all thine increase," and the motto or dedicatory verse is not shamed by the accounts that follow. They show "plain living," and in certain respects, such as the avoidance of debt, the purchase of books, and generous contribution to the need of others, they indicate "high thinking." In 1841, the year before I was born, when my father had four children living, his total income was £163.16.0, and his expenditure £162.5.1, a finely balanced account indeed, with its £1.10.11 in hand at the end of the year. In addition to this, it should be mentioned he had a furnished house rent-free. He would have been the last to complain of anything grudging or parsimonious in the support he received from his church. The Methodists were a generous people then as they are now, and his income would compare not unfavourably with that of the majority of the working clergy of his time. Assuredly he lived on it happily enough, and never was in debt.

Two branches of his expenditure especially interest me as showing the manner of man he was, his charity account, and his book-buying. In one year I find, Household Expenses £72, Subscriptions and charity £7. In another year the two items are respectively, £67 and £7.7.0. In connection with the Centenary of Methodism in 1839, he gave a donation of twenty guineas, half of it in that year, and half in the year following. In 1841 he subscribed to the Missionary Society, four guineas, to Kingswood School, one guinea, to the Bible Society, one guinea. There are many entries of smaller sums given to "A poor man," "Two poor men," "A poor woman," "A poor Christian

brother," "A poor sailor boy," "A poor local preacher," etc.

On books he spent heroically, though the scale of his transactions in this field was necessarily small. Here are a few of his ventures: Smollett's History, £1.9.6; Milner's "Church History," nine shillings and sixpence; "Scottish Pulpit," a guinea; Valpy's Greek Testament, one pound, ten; Doddridge's "Notes on the New Testament," thirteen and sixpence; Goodwin's "Redemption," seven shillings, and "Zeal without Innovation," half a crown. "Zeal without Innovation" is good, and at half a crown is cheap. It may well serve to close the list.

But in all these years of frugal account-keeping is there no mention of luxuries? Yes, there are items which may be so described. "Tuning the piano," three and sixpence. "Excursion to Chatsworth," one pound, five shillings. This must have been a very gay affair, involving my father and mother in an expenditure of twelve and sixpence each. In 1837 I find "Panorama," four and sixpence. "Malt and hops," nine and sixpence, speaks for itself; and on June 30th, 1838, there is the splendid item "Coronation Expenses," fourteen shillings. In January, 1839, is an entry, the only one of its kind in all these years, "Cigars," three shillings.

The chief reflection that occurs to me in looking over this record of household economics is, that whatever evidence it affords of narrow means, we children had at the time no sense of privation, or of any painful effort on our parents' part to make a small income suffice for a large family. There was nothing mean or pinched in our household life,

nothing to depress, or teach us all too early that there was such a thing as poverty, and that we were living on the very edge of it. Whatever anxieties our parents had they kept them to themselves, and did not allow them to darken our young lives. It is true that we went without many things, but nothing that we really needed, and in all my recollection of our early days there is no shadow of that kind of care which in some homes embitters the lives even of young children.

By the accident or providence of my birth I was a sort of intruder in a long succession of daughters. Three sisters preceded and three followed me, a very happy arrangement, as I now reckon it, but not without its stress for me in early days. I never was able to establish my status as belonging to the elder half of the family, and was equally unsuccessful in asserting any kind of headship over the younger half, my claim being resented on the one side and resisted on the other. It might seem to be a matter of no moment whether I was the youngest of the seniors or the eldest of the juniors in a simple home like ours, but each position, if fully realised, had its advantages. Certain ideas and sentiments on the subject lay at the back of my mind, and even with small boys ideas count for something. Moreover, there were considerations of a practical kind involved in this question of status. In such matters as the time for going to bed, and as to being admitted to the tea-table or sent to the nursery when there were visitors, it made a real difference whether you were one of the nursery contingent proper, or enjoyed the full franchise of the dining-room.

Some compensation for belonging to the former might have been found had I been recognised as its head or chief, but this recognition, alas, was not forthcoming. Now I did not object so much to the mild oppression of my elders, as to the fact that my juniors objected to any sort of over-lordship on my part. I could not understand why, if my big sisters thought fit to count me as the small dust of the balance, I should not do the same with my little sisters when it suited me to do so. But no, seniors and juniors had a way of closing their ranks and becoming as one when any controversy arose, because, after all, they were girls and I was only a boy. The maiden kingdom was "as a city that is compact together," and I was a helpless unit.

I remember on one occasion going to my father—I was about eight years old at the time—to complain, "I can't have a bit of a quarrel with any one of them, but they are all down on me." "My son," was his reply, "you and I are in a minority in this house; *we must stand by one another!*" Filled with the moral strength of the alliance thus offered, I took courage.

There was little need to invoke the treaty thus made. Our skirmishes were few and unimportant, and our affection strong. Seldom has man had sisters that were more to him than mine have been to me. What a garden of girls it was in which my childhood and youth were spent! The gifts of wit and humour, and quick, felicitous speech, of music and song, with

. . . household motions light and free,
And steps of virgin-liberty,

all were theirs. The abundant fulfilment of after years was there in blossom or bud, though none could foresee the forms it was to take. But whatever precosity of intelligence was to be found amongst them, it was associated with youthfulness of spirit, and not with premature gravity or womanishness. When they were all together tongues would run fast, until at times my father would say, "One at a time, girls, one at a time." Of every sort of eccentricity or absurdity that came within our range they had a keen perception, and could ring changes upon it with ready skill, good-natured enough for the most part, but a little keen in the case of pretentious people and the pompously dull, who seemed to deserve all they got in the way of criticism or caricature. But over these our good father would throw the shield of his charity, sometimes interrupting the flow of too pungent talk with the seemingly irrelevant inquiry, "What is the price of potatoes?" At others he would gently repeat the lines from Pope's *Universal Prayer*,

That mercy I to others show,
That mercy show to me.

Either of these hints was well understood and immediately acted upon.

In our early years we had no special advantages in the way of education, so far at least as schools were concerned. For some years a governess for my sisters lived in the house, but I do not think that counted for much in their mental growth. The companionship of my father and mother counted for more, and their intercourse with each other for almost as much. We always had books

easily accessible. There were books in the nursery, books in the parlour—dear obsolete word of the mid-Victorian period—and a wealth of them in the study, not cabined and confined within glass doors, but ready to hand. New books, too, found their way into the house from time to time, and were eagerly laid hold of.

In most families, I suppose, where the children are fairly quick-witted and fond of reading, some little attempts at literature are forthcoming. As in the childhood of the race so in that of the individual, the actual world does not suffice. The imagination has worlds of its own, and it is not enough to visit them by one's self—they must be described to others. My youngest sister but one, a bright child of six or seven, was, I think, the first of us to feel this impulse and obey it. She was unable as yet to write anything but laborious capital letters, so calling an elder sister to her aid she dictated her first story, "The History of the Piebald Family." It had, like many works of fiction, a kind of starting place in the region of fact, though facts were soon left behind in favour of invention pure and free. She had taken great interest in a motherly old horse, or rather, grey mare, that grazed in a neighbouring paddock. She invested her straightway with the character of a widow and mother of a family. The respectable cart-horse, her husband, was dead, leaving her to bring up a family of colts. Some of these were steady and good, worked for their living, and from time to time brought her presents of oats and hay. But the darling of her widowed heart was her youngest, a frisky mischievous imp of a colt who

didn't like work, and didn't like school, and did all sorts of foolish things, in spite of which his fond mother loved him dearly, and said he would know better by and by. "And after a while, Mrs. Piebald, that was her name, was taken ill and had not long to live. And her family of colts was very sorry. And they sent for the doctor's horse to give her medicine, and then for the minister's horse to pray with her ; and after telling them all to be very good, never to run away or to kick anybody, she died. And they all cried very much, and wiped their eyes with their hoofs as well as they could. And her darling little colt went to live in a gentleman's stable, and grew up to be a beautiful carriage-horse. So this is all about the Piebald family."

At a slightly later period the author of this noble story, coming under some Miltonian inspiration, conceived the idea of a poem on high and mysterious themes. But at the end of the first line she stopped, either as having too much imagination or too little to go on. And yet that line promised well. There was no preliminary dallying with the subject, no idle invocation of the Muse, but a plunge into the heart of things : "And down the shady path that devil walked," with which words her epic began and ended.

In later years she has shown real poetic power, and has written admirable verse, but her childish genius seems to have flown too high in its poetic endeavour. Another effort began "Crash, crash, my soul, like a thunderbolt over the rocks,"—when inspiration deserted her, or her soul "crashed," and could say no more.

But if this little sister of mine stumbled on these occasions beneath the weight of her thought, or was blinded by her own vision, she did not fail in adequacy of expression in verbal speech or rejoinder. And an incident that I well remember shows that she had a keen sense of copyright in respect of a good saying. She had on one occasion amused the whole family by an extremely clever and pungent remark. A day or two afterwards, when there was a guest or two at the table, my father repeated her saying, though without mentioning the author's name. Amid the laughter that it caused she sat swelling with indignation at hearing her witticism quoted without acknowledgment, an invasion, as it seemed to her, of the primary rights of a humorist. She bore it as long as she could, until, bursting into tears, she exclaimed: "God knows I made that joke!" and ran out of the room.

She was, indeed, a child of extraordinary imagination, with powers of language to correspond. Coming to the breakfast-table one morning in a depressed and somewhat irritable mood, she was asked what was the matter with her. "Oh," she replied, "I have had a bad dream. I dreamt that I was Antichrist, and had my ears boxed with sheet-lightning for my impudence." What could the wisest parent say to such weird imagining?

There was no end to the bright sayings that flew round the circle, or were tossed from one to another in the days when that circle was yet unbroken, and all were radiantly young. Pleasant as the memory of it is to me, I must not unduly dwell upon it. One shattering sentence, however,

which a few years later fell, or rather shot, from the lips of the same little sister I must quote. A very raw and youthful divine who was our guest for a day or two oppressed us somewhat by a didactic strain of talk that seemed to us to be rather forced and artificial. We did not object to be spoken to about religion, but it must be simply done, and with obvious sincerity, and he took the wrong way with us. While sitting at the breakfast-table he told us at considerable length a dream that he had had, in which he said: "I dreamt that I saw my heart, and it was all black, and hard, and full of stones." "Oh, then," was the immediate rejoinder, "it wasn't your heart, it was your *gizzard*." The rest of the dream remained untold.

For myself I had no such early-springing literary instincts as my younger sister had, but I have reason to believe that the desire to be a preacher awoke in me "when that I was a little tiny boy." The first manifestation of it that I remember was on a certain Sunday afternoon when I induced my mother and sisters to be my congregation that I might preach to them. Though, so far as I know, I had never seen a surpliced minister, some vague sense of the fitness of things led me to put on my nightgown for the occasion, thereby straining tremendously the gravity of the little assembly. For the devotional part of the service I had secured a large Prayer Book, unfortunately an old one, containing prayers for a monarch and members of the Royal Family long deceased, and when I prayed for King George the Second and Queen Caroline, my congregation broke into unseemly laughter,

which sorely disconcerted me and brought the service to a hasty close.

But at a still earlier period, to which my memory does not go back, it appears that I had preached a sermon in the nursery, of which one vivid parable survives in my mother's handwriting, and endorsed "The imagination of a child in his fourth year."

It will be seen to show some directness of style, together with theological boldness, and a freely-working imagination. This is how it runs in the document, now more than seventy years old, that lies before me:

"There was once a little boy, and he was very wicked, and he went to hell. And Satan burnt him, and the little boy begged him to let him go, and Satan wouldn't. So the little boy told Satan if he would let him alone, and not burn him any more, he would sweep hell's chimneys for nothing. So when the little boy had begged very hard, he let him, and he was Satan's sweep. One day when he was sweeping and wishing to get away, there came a great wind and blew him up hell's chimney right out at the top."

CHAPTER II

1850-1853

Birmingham—My First Schoolmaster—My Elder Brother and His Friends—New Influences.

IN September, 1850, when I was eight and a half years old, my father removed from Huddersfield to Birmingham, and I was sent to a day school kept by Mr. Howell, a man of well-marked individuality, with something of a reputation as a schoolmaster. King Edward's School overshadowed all other educational institutions in the town, but there was room for schools of humbler aim and more slender traditions, and for many years Mr. Howell's school had a constituency of its own and was fairly prosperous. So while my elder brother went to King Edward's, I, as a small boy, was put under the care of Mr. Howell. As a teacher he did not in the least degree anticipate modern methods, but working on well-established lines he was capable and effective. In person he was tall and imposing, had well-formed features, somewhat florid manners, and certain mannerisms with which his boys soon became acquainted. He was a strict disciplinarian, and used the cane freely. In the matter of punishments he had what I may call his regular pensioners. One of my schoolfellows, for example, had a daily caning, not for vice or wickedness, but for a long-standing habit of not knowing his lessons. There was little or no ill-feeling on either side. Mr. Howell, I believe, rather liked

the boy than otherwise, and was on quite friendly terms with his family. Nor did his victim bear malice ; that he should really try to learn his lessons apparently never entered his mind, and the caning which resulted from this line of conduct seemed to him in the natural order of things. For the first few months that I was at school I received no corporal punishment, but was a daily spectator of the executions that took place—at first an awe-stricken, and then an indifferent or amused spectator. After a time I was even conscious of a certain feeling of inferiority, not to say humiliation, at never being caned. My status in the school seemed to lack something, my citizenship in that honest republic to be incomplete. This was a state of mind that was in itself pretty sure to lead to results—and it did. On a certain occasion after school I had a small boxing encounter with a street-boy—all such were our natural enemies—and Mr. Howell happened to see it from his window. Next morning, as soon as prayers were over—prayers that had not, I subsequently thought, softened his heart as they ought to have done—I was called up to his desk. If I thought I was about to be complimented on my valour, or thanked for defending the honour of the school, I was soon undeceived. At his bidding I held out my hand. It was a proud but anxious moment when I realised that I was about to be caned. The first cut across my fingers more than satisfied my curiosity. Henceforth he might fight his own street-boys and defend the honour of the school himself.

The ordinary mode of rewards and punishments was, I believe, of Mr. Howell's own

invention, and deserves to be described as a form of school discipline in existence sixty years ago. At the beginning of the half-year each of us was furnished with a capital of a hundred marks in little brass counters stamped with their respective values—one, five, ten, or twenty—a school coinage available for receipts and payments according to the requirements of school life. For a lesson well said, or an exercise well written, we received payment according to a fixed scale. For work of any kind badly done, or for minor schoolroom offences, we were mulcted on a corresponding scale, and had to pay up in the same coinage. Thus we were young traders, who by industry and good conduct might acquire wealth visible and tangible in this same brass currency; or by idleness and breaking of rules might sink to poverty and end in bankruptcy. Then matters would be adjusted by a flogging, fresh capital provided, and things began again. The boy who thus began life afresh was, however, debited with this second capital, to be reckoned against him when his balance-sheet was made up at the end of the half-year, and the boy in each class who came best through all market risks and had the largest amount in hand received a prize.

It was a curious system, with some droll sides to it. With boys of certain temperaments it worked fairly well as a "Spur to prick the sides of their intent." They liked to see their hoard increase, and they hated parting with these little coins. The budding instinct of the merchant and the capitalist was directed to gaining as many and losing as few of them as possible. They were re-

garded as ends in themselves, and learning one's lessons and behaving decently were means to these ends—a somewhat perilous satire on life and morals in general. But there were others to whom the system, and the motives through which it worked, did not appeal. I am afraid I was one of these. Within a few weeks of the beginning of the half-year I was usually heading straight for insolvency. I was not a stupid or a bad boy, but I lost marks by carelessness and from not taking sufficient interest in the whole business. I think Mr. Howell saw this and took a lenient view of my case. Anyway, I never went quite bankrupt, and never closed the half-year with much of a balance in hand.

One thing I think he did not know—or if he did he kept the knowledge to himself as finding it a thing impossible to deal with—and that was the traffic that went on in the little coins that were supposed to represent industry and virtue. As in other spheres of life, the impecunious had recourse to borrowing, and the thrifty engaged in judicious lending. A loan of ten or twenty marks could be had for a consideration. Nay, a loan would on occasion expand into a gift or become an unblushing sale. Sooner than face Mr. Howell as an insolvent, to be caned and set up in business again as a reprieved bankrupt, a sixpence could be got from a tender-hearted mother that would purchase marks sufficient at all events to go on with.

The educational methods followed in the school were, as I have said, old-fashioned. Nearly everything was committed to memory. I learnt by heart pages of Roman and English history, long

lists of kings and emperors, rules of grammar and arithmetic, and set-pieces of rhetorical kind in prose and verse. I knew my declensions and conjugations, my gerunds and supines, but there was little or no explanation, or effort to get at the law and reason of these things. Why words were what they were, and how they came to be so, were inquiries beyond our range.

Imperfect, however, as the methods were, there was good in them. My memory was well trained and exercised, and a good deal was committed to its keeping that was to be of service later on. I had yet to learn that the history of England was a good deal more than a succession of kings, but it was not a bad thing to know the order in which they succeeded, and the dates of their coming and going. So with Latin grammar; under Mr. Howell I took large quantities of it on board, where it was stowed away until the time came for other teachers to turn it to account.

To refer again for a moment to the personality of my first schoolmaster, who has long since answered to his name and obeyed the final call. I had somehow in those early days read Goldsmith's "Deserted Village," and certain lines of it were immediately assigned, not to say consecrated, to Mr. Howell, for whom it seemed to me they might have been written. Never did schoolmaster show more clearly in his "morning face" what we had to expect from him. This was largely determined by the state of his digestion, and the kind of night he had passed—matters over which we, poor mortals, had no control. We could see in a moment when his mood was easy and genial,

or a glance would show that there was trouble in the wind. Some thought that these things were further indicated by the waistcoat he wore. One of these was of black velvet, clerical in its expression, suggestive of a paternal heart beneath it, and generally of peace and goodwill. Another waistcoat he had of flaming colour, "whose hue, angry and brave," was a veritable storm signal, which when we saw we feared the worst.

Charles Lamb had memories of this sort connected with Dr. Boyer, the Upper Master of Christ Hospital in his time, whose two wigs had each its separate omen. In those days I did not know my Charles Lamb, but "The Deserted Village" gave me all I wanted in the way of portraiture of our schoolroom life :—

Well had the boding tremblers learn'd to trace
The day's disasters in his morning face :
Full well we laughed with counterfeited glee
At all his jokes, for many a joke had he ;
Full well the busy whisper circling round
Convey'd the dismal tidings when he frowned.

The last time I saw my old schoolmaster, now more than fifty years ago, he was old and feeble, and his mind was clouded. After looking round to see that no one overheard him, he said to me, "One of my old pupils is going to preach to-night, Fred Macdonald, do you know him ? "

Goldsmith may supply a farewell couplet :—

But past is all his fame. The very spot
Where many a time he triumph'd is forgot.

The old Georgian house where he kept school

for so many years is pulled down, and I am one of his very few old pupils now living to remember him.

Meanwhile, new influences were mingling with our family life. A breath as of morning began to stir among us, a stream to flow through the quiet precincts of our home that quickened all it touched, and, for some of us at least, enlarged and altered life's whole outlook. It was in Birmingham that these influences were first felt, but it was in the years of our residence in London, to which we removed in 1853, that they attained their full strength, with results destined to be permanent.

As my brother Harry rose to the highest form in King Edward's School and moved steadily towards the University, he formed certain friendships among his schoolfellows that led to their becoming friends of ours also. They were sufficiently our seniors for us to think them very wise and clever, yet not too much our seniors for free and genial intercourse. My sisters were bright, quick-witted girls, very responsive to intellectual and moral stimulus, and capable of ready enthusiasm for anything that appeared better or more beautiful than they had known before. They received with frank enjoyment the friendship of their brother's friends; and these were only too pleased to have the companionship of girls who sang delightfully, had a blessed gift of humour, and were willing to be talked to and read to on all manner of subjects. So a good deal of new life came whirling through our doors with these our visitors, rejoicing in their youth and finding it bliss to be alive. To me all this mattered very

little at first. I was too young to feel it. A school-boy of ten or eleven does not usually count for much with young men to whom the world of literature and art is just revealing itself, and he, in turn, with huge respect for them at the bottom of his heart, is not at ease with them, and seeks other society than theirs.

But I have very distinct remembrance of the bright company that used to fill our dingy little house with light and laughter. As I write their names I see them again in their golden youth, rich in its promise for days to come, and meanwhile a joy and delight to themselves and to others:—Wilfred Heeley, William Fulford, Edward Burne-Jones, Cornell Price, Richard Watson Dixon, and Edwin Hatch. Seldom has a great school had within her walls at the same time young life richer in intellectual gifts and aspirations. The school which a few years before had produced Benson, Lightfoot, and Westcott was again bringing forth sons who would do her honour. The nature and measure of their gifts had yet to be ascertained, but the fire within them was already eagerly aflame.

It was, indeed, a time of much and varied mental quickening. Many powerful influences were at work, and here was a group of young lives abundantly susceptible and responsive. The after-glow of the Oxford Movement was still in the sky, and it was not in the sphere of religion alone that it made itself felt. It had rediscovered the Middle Ages; it had banished for a while the eighteenth century and all its works—to come back again by and by with new meaning; it had given fresh

stimulus to Art, and had reinforced the romantic and emotional elements of literature. So far as the theological side of the Movement was concerned, I think I am right in saying that every member of the group was influenced by it for a while, and none of them permanently.

Tennyson then reigned supreme in the domain of poetry. Every young ingenuous soul to which poetry meant anything at all was his willing bondsman. His was the voice that spoke to all such the things they loved to hear, and uttered for them the things they longed to say. Unlike Browning, who had to win his way against hindrances that lay in his own qualities and poetic methods, Tennyson gave no shock and offered no barrier to those who sought him. Wordsworth, two generations earlier, and Browning a little later, had to be wooed in faith and patience before they could be won; but Tennyson, less mystic and spiritual than Wordsworth, less of a thinker and more of an artist than Browning, less removed than either of them from the ordinary levels of thought and feeling—Tennyson drew to himself the youth of the early 'fifties, capturing alike its intellect and its heart. My sister, Lady Burne-Jones, in her "Memorials" of her husband, has told how Fulford introduced her and her sisters to his poetry; "He was the first person we had ever heard read poetry aloud, and admirably he did it, with his fine voice and fervent love of what he read. Towards us he showed judgment for which I can never be thankful enough, for he fed us with Longfellow first of all, as the food suitable for our years, and so brought us gradually into a condition more or less fit for the

revelation, before introducing us to the works of his prime hero, Tennyson."

Second only to that of Tennyson, if indeed second, was the influence of Carlyle upon this little company of friends. If Tennyson was their poet, Carlyle was their prophet. Maurice and Kingsley stood high among their spiritual pastors and masters. In Dickens they delighted with a delight like that of everyone else. Thackeray was on a higher plane, "a lesser Shakespeare," as one of them called him. A little later, Browning and Ruskin rose upon them with an ascendancy that had results for many a year to come.

Burne-Jones carried for us the keys of the mediæval world, and was our guide into its romance and the interpreter of its mysteries. To him we owed our first acquaintance with Fouqué's "Sinttram," and "Sidonia," and above all, Malory's "Morte d'Arthur."

Heeley was an excellent scholar, with a wide range of knowledge on many subjects. A certain awkwardness and shyness would prevent one from describing him as brilliant, but he had a pretty wit, talked well, and was a charming letter-writer. He was the only one of the group who went to Cambridge, not to Oxford. He became a Fellow of Trinity, entered the Indian Civil Service, and died in early middle age. I should judge that history and philosophy were his true bent, and if he had spent his life in England I think he would have done valuable literary work.

Dixon had the blood of two generations of divines in him. His father, James Dixon, and his maternal grandfather, Richard Watson, were men

of great powers and lofty character. Each of them was in his time President of the Wesleyan Conference, and will long live in Methodist tradition. Himself in after years a divine of merit and a distinguished historian, he was, in grain, a poet. His noble head, deep voice, and slow, meditative way of speaking were all in accord, and suited well, if only by contrast, a quaint and characteristic humour. Dixon was a greater man than the Church which he adorned was, generally speaking, aware of until it was too late to show him any adequate consideration. I saw little of him after his Oxford days, but at long intervals received one or two letters from him. He wrote to me on the last day of October, 1899, only two months before his death, to congratulate me on the position to which I had been elected—"President of the Wesleyan Conference is a great position. As the son and grandson of two Presidents I feel the more entitled to perform the pleasant duty which I owe to yourself and your sisters as a friend." But this is at once a digression and an anticipation.

Hatch was, I think, less known by his companions, and at that time perhaps less known to himself than any of them. School association rather than mental affinity made him one of them, and at Oxford, where "the Set" attained a deeper unity, his way seems to have diverged from theirs. His course, however, was a distinguished one. He became a theologian of mark, one of the few Englishmen whose reputation as a scholar was not only English but Continental. His *Bampton Lecture* of 1880 on "The Organisation of the Early Christian Churches" possessed vitality enough to arouse

considerable controversy, and to secure the honour of being translated into German by Professor Harnack. I was in his company the evening before his ordination, and never saw him afterwards that I remember, but when I think of him, a verse he wrote invariably comes to my mind :

Breathe on me, breath of God ;
Fill me with life anew,
That I may love what Thou dost love,
And do what Thou wouldst do.

Cormell Price, as boy and man, was greatly loved by all who knew him. In particular he was the very dear friend of Burne-Jones. The friendship, begun in their schooldays, endured to the end. He lived the hard-working life of a schoolmaster, uncheered by any great preferment or other visible reward, spending himself bravely on successive generations of boys, and sunning himself at holiday times in the friendships that began in Birmingham and were sealed at Oxford.

All are now gone. Many good gifts were bestowed on one and another of them : to none was given length of days. To me who knew them in their golden youth its halo still surrounds them ; for though they became painters, poets, and scholars of distinction, they were never more attractive, lovable, and altogether wonderful than they were then.

I have spoken of Heeley as a charming letter-writer, and a specimen of his skill in this "gentlest art" may here be given. There lies before me as I write a letter I received from him on my twelfth birthday, or rather, two days after it.

TRIN. COLL., CAM.

26th Feb., 1854.

I have an indistinct kind of impression that to-morrow is your birthday, and that it behoves me to write to you thereupon. I have no notion how old you are, and so shall not, as I am wont, suit my congratulations to your years, but simply wish you very sincerely, many happy 'turns, and plenty of room to turn in; which last I suppose you have secured in the new house, on which also accept my congratulations.

I bethink me—for want of something else to write about—of my own boyish days, now, alas! no more, and need only hope that you may spend your birthday as happily as I have often spent mine. They come very near together (you didn't write to me, though), and, in fact, you will dog my heels all through this vale of woe. Thus am I pointed out by nature as your bright exemplar, your cynosure, or model man, whom to follow is to be perfect. Now for a little advice, which I always give in birthday letters.

Young man, listen to me, and hearken not to the voice of the charmer. Thou hast heard of the adder, who, being deaf, yet taketh the precaution to stop her ears. Thou hast seen her in fancy, her one ear laid against the sand, her other carefully plugged by her tail. So deaf be thou to Folly; which comprehensive prosopopoeia doth include bat, ball, marble, kite, and all and sundry the traps and tools which do divert youth from the pleasant paths of the Muses, from the winding ways of Parnassus hill.

(1) *A Triad of Good Advice:*

Do as you're bid;
Speak when you're spoken to;
and
Shut the door after you.

(2) *A Triad of Advice—good if rightly understood :*

Eat,
Drink,
and
Be merry.

(3) *A Triad of Wholesome Things :*

Reading,
Riting,
'Rithmetic.

(4) *A Triad of Exertion :*

Pull —A long Pull,
Pull —A strong Pull,
PULL —A Pull all together.

(5) *A Triad of Effects—the Causes of which are to be gathered from the previous Triads :*

Healthy,
Wealthy,
and
Wise.

With all good wishes,

Votre très humble domestique,

WILFRED L. HEELEY.

I have said little thus far of my elder and only brother, Henry James, always known as Harry. He was the oldest of us all, the apple of his father's eye, the son of his right hand. For Biblical language seems necessary to describe the affection, hope, and pride with which my father regarded his eldest son. From the first he was old for his years, and while yet in his teens his companionship with his father was more nearly on equal terms than is at all usual

between father and son, as is abundantly shown in their correspondence.

In temperament my brother was somewhat reserved, and he had little of the quick-glancing wit and gift of nimble speech that distinguished his sisters. His intellect was a strong one, and he found little difficulty in mastering any task to which he really gave himself. But his mind was not well served by his body. There lurked within his constitution a certain tendency to lethargy which would now and again assert itself to the detriment of his work, and involve him in self-reproach and dissatisfaction. It was partly, perhaps, reaction from educational over-pressure, for he seemed marked out from the first to be a scholar, and accepting the vocation, was pushed steadily forward. Up to a certain point his course was a brilliant one, but its promise was never exactly fulfilled. After three successful years at King Edward's School, Birmingham, under the inspiring headmastership of Dr. Gifford, he gained an open scholarship at Corpus Christi College, Oxford. He subsequently took a first at Moderations and was expected by all his friends to take the highest classical honours in his final Examination. Then the high-strung cord of his endeavours seemed to slacken. I know not why or how, he left the University without taking a degree, and, breaking entirely with his past life, went to America and entered into business. I have reason to know that he was greatly loved by his friends there, and highly esteemed for his intellectual powers and wide range of knowledge.

My brother was essentially an eldest son, and

had high views of the position. Not that any property or social distinction was or could be attached to the position in a family like ours. He would not, I think, have been influenced by considerations of that kind had they existed, for questions of money and social status never greatly interested him. But he set great store by authority that had moral or mystic foundations, and of such a kind, in his view, was that of an eldest son and elder brother. His quasi-feudal supremacy over us derived additional strength in our childhood from the fact that for some years he was away at school the greater part of his time, returning for the holidays in a blaze of superiority, and with stories of manifold adventure. To me, separated from him by the tremendous interval of six and a half years, he seemed to be hedged by a kind of divinity, and not all the water in the rough rude sea could wash the balm from his anointing. He was very good to me in the matter of my lessons, and would take great pains to put me on the right track and do things in the right way—more pains, I thought, than they deserved. I had a small boy's indifference to accuracy where Latin Grammar was concerned, and the stress he laid upon it seemed to me excessive to the point of superstition.

But there were matters on which the rigour of his principles galled me even more. He had, as Dr. Johnson said his wife had, "a passion for cleanliness" that I did not wholly share. As regards the washing of hands, I did not hold with the Pharisees, but took the larger view. Knowing this, he would make me "show hands" before sitting down to meals, and many a time was I sent

away with bitterness in my soul to wash before I ate.

Then he had strict views as to the time for a little boy to go to bed, and when my gentle mother was disposed to relax the rule in my favour, he would urge the letter of the law. Oh, why does life in all its waking fulness suddenly become so desirable to a child when bedtime comes ; and why does he so loathe at night the bed he will be so unwilling to leave in the morning ?

It was not ill-nature, or any grudging of happiness to his juniors that made my brother act as he did, but a perhaps exaggerated sense of law and order, together with a feeling of responsibility for the right working of the universe, or at least of such portions of it as lay within his range.

Some extracts from his letters to me, written while I was yet a young schoolboy, will show the seriousness of his interest in my welfare, as well as the qualities of his own mind. The school referred to was not Mr. Howell's, but St. Peter's Collegiate School, Eaton Square, a Proprietary School in union with King's College, which I entered in September, 1853, immediately after our removal as a family to London.

BIRMINGHAM.

September 27th, 1853.

I am glad so very convenient a school has turned up for you. Do yourself credit both in the amount of work you do, and in the manner of doing it. A thing that is neatly done carries its own praise with it ; what is slovenly done needs little further to condemn it. Accuracy will be of no end of use to you, and is worth some pains to

acquire. What confidence could I have in taking down Mr. Gifford's remarks, unless I knew him to be an accurate as well as a full and ready man? If your knowledge can be relied on, you will find people glad to make use of it in this careless ramshackle world. Beside this, it will add to your independence and will make you feel cool under fire, when other men's hearts quake in their bosoms. No Don of either University, with wide waistcoat before him, and a long string of degrees at his back, will be able to bully or frighten you out of the truth. I should like to know what you read, when you get to work, what arithmetic you do, whether you begin Algebra and Euclid, or not, and all you can tell me about the school. Also your impressions of London, and accounts of your strolls of an afternoon, will be sure to interest me.

December 6th, 1853.

If you were to write oftener, you would cause me to have a better notion of what you do and how you fare. I was glad to hear of your success at school. If the lads with you are dummies, so much the worse for them, and so much the more disgraceful for you if you get below them. With such companions, you must certainly keep ahead, or be licked according to your deserts. Your handwriting is much improved, I see. Mr. Howell is glad to hear of your progress, and hopes you will stick to your work. Perseverance is the main thing; at least, all other things remain shaky without it. *Gutta cavat lapidem, non vi, sed sæpe cadendo.* So that if you were as soft as water, by application you might make some impression on studies as hard as stone. When I come home you will be put through your drill, that I may see what progress you have made. If it's satisfactory we shall both be pleased; if not, why——

“Have you formed an acquaintance with any young scamps so as to interchange visits with them? Do you wear a square cap, and if not, why not? Are you grown,

and is it fast or slow? Do you box ever? What time do you go to bed? I expect we shall have to make a revolution in this. Write to me once more before I come home; you will break up a week earlier than we, probably, as our day is the twenty-third. My prizes are by no means certain, but I can take what comes, you know, and never mind what doesn't. Prepare to keep to your side of the bed o' nights, for I'll be with you shortly.

These letters, it should be remembered, were written by a youth only just turned eighteen to a brother of eleven. Much may be gathered from them, short as they are, of the writer's mind and disposition; and perhaps they will explain the fact that my love and admiration for him were just a little tempered with fear.

But the letters that passed between him and his father will throw light upon the character of both, and upon the affectionate intimacy that existed between them. Thus—to Harry from his father:

CHELSEA.

September 23rd, 1853.

Many, many congratulations, my dear Harry, on the return of your birthday. You will wear, now, in my imagination, the *toga virilis*, in spite of that little English jacket which you actually wear. You have reached your eighteenth birthday. The blessing of your father and mother be on your head. You are, I believe, fully impressed with the importance of improving this year to the utmost. It is the last of your school-boy life, and affords your last opportunity of obtaining the minute and accurate instruction which our Grammar Schools impart. The foundation is now all but laid on which the superstructure of after years is to be raised. Your instruction

hitherto, though elemental, has been in a large sense *seminal*, and with ripening years you will see how important it has been. One of the most valuable results of accurate early training is the power and habit obtained of giving concentrated attention to anything. If paternal affection has not in some degree blinded me, I believe that you have acquired this power beyond what is common at your years. The highest order of attention is not limited to the hour spent in reading, but includes that after-reflection and arrangement of what is read which resembles the office of digestion in a healthy human body. I remember a quaint remark that I once met with : " Marshal thy notions into a handsome method. One will carry twice as much weight, trussed and packed up in bundles as when it lies untoward, flapping and hanging about his shoulders."

I take the children out as opportunity serves, greatly to their delight. I have let Fred prowling off this afternoon to Piccadilly, Regent Circus, and Oxford Street. He shows great acuteness in finding his way about.

In reply Harry Macdonald wrote to his father:

BIRMINGHAM.

September 27th, 1853.

I thank you very heartily for all your kind wishes on my behalf on my eighteenth birthday. *Toga virilis* may come when it likes ; but I will be a boy as long as I can. It seems jollier to me to be boy than man, just now ; months and years will bring submission, and I shall be happy enough to be a man, just as I have acquiesced comfortably in boyhood. To-night the usual copy of Greek verse is let off, as we are to have two papers on the *Acharnians* of Aristophanes to-morrow and Thursday. The subject for the Bishop's Prize is to be found in Philippians ii. 1-11, critical and explanatory essay, not to be given until after

the Christmas holidays. (My brother obtained this prize, and it is now in my possession, a fine copy of Bruder's *Concordantiæ Novi Testamenti Græci*, bearing the seal of the school, and the inscription, Bishop Lee's Prize, 1854.)

For little children, and in a slighter degree, for grown-up people, London need lose little of its enchantment. I daresay our youngsters still regard it as a city of dream-land, and are not too anxious to dispel the illusion. Bulwer says that walking into London quite destroys its effect; the long suburbs preclude any feeling of novelty. But the railway takes you well into London, so you can be saved the gradual disenchantment by the simple expedient of closing the eyes.

In the course of this month my father's last surviving sister, Mrs. Hoskins, of Jersey, died, leaving him, so far as he knew, without a single relation in the world other than those arising from his marriage. She had resided for many years at Eden Grove House, St. Lawrence, in that island, where her husband, whose second wife she was, carried on a successful boarding school. I do not know that any of us children ever saw her. She was in her fifty-fourth year when she died, and she left no family.

A letter respecting this family bereavement, to Harry Macdonald from his father, runs :

CHELSEA.

September, 1853.

I enclose you the letter which conveyed to us the tidings of your Aunt's decease. She had been a great sufferer, and patience in her had its perfect work. Her memory is very precious to me. My mother's long and severe affliction compelled her, as the eldest daughter, to have a more

than ordinary share in attending to me as a child. She was prematurely womanish in her person and habits, and, being five or six years older than myself, had great command and influence over me. She was, next to your incomparable mother, the most unselfish being I have ever met. Her devoted affection to her father will never be erased from my memory. Many times did he invoke the blessing of God on his dutiful child.

I reflect with pleasure on the little aid I was able to render her after she became an orphan, without a home and penniless. I took her to my home, and for a few years was blessed and honoured by her residence with us. She endeared herself to all who could appreciate humble, unpretending piety. Her marriage was eminently a happy one. God gave her all temporal blessings, and lighted up for her the Valley of the Shadow of Death.

There is something melancholy in the thought that I alone survive of my family. Father, mother, brother, sisters—all are gone, and I alone am left. But my ancestry was godly, and I would not exchange it for any distinctions which the Herald's College could supply. Who may be the last survivor of our family, God only knows. In the teens of future years someone will stand as I do now, the last representative of a once large and happy family circle. God grant whoever that individual may be, he or she may have as consolatory a retrospect as that to which my mind adverts.

Another letter to Harry Macdonald from his father may find a place here :

CHELSEA.

November 25th, 1853.

We are looking forward with joyous anticipation to your arrival at home. I shall be delighted to have all my children once more with me. This will not now frequently

occur, and perhaps on that account the pleasure will be all the greater. We never forget you at family prayer. You are with us then. And seldom do I bow my knees in secret without imploring a blessing on you. The temptations and dangers of life now begin to thicken around you. The good principles with which I believe your mind and heart to be stored are really valuable when they guide, regulate, and restrain practice. You have correct views of education and learning—means to an end. The real and highest mark to aim at is the glory of God. Every other object will pass away with this world. Sound scholarship and simple, earnest godliness will qualify you for usefulness, and supply springs of unfailing gladness to you. Do not on any account restrain prayer before God. It was no mean authority, no croaking bigot, who said, *Bene orasse est bene studuisse*. Does not Cicero say that no man becomes great *sine divino afflatu*? Could you not in some thoughtful and studious hour write out a short prayer to be used daily before your private studies?

To this Harry replied :

BIRMINGHAM.

November 27th, 1853.

Thanks for reminding me of what one is always tempted to forget, that with God lies the power of improving us, and that all attempts of our own merely will be failures.

I try to remember this at prayer time, and succeed in some degree in a freer utterance of my feelings than formerly. Whoever sows or waters, whatever is sown and however often watered, God alone has power to give increase. It is one of my greatest blessings that I have parents who have not failed to show me this.

A day or two before Christmas Harry came home, and was enthusiastically welcomed by us

all. Father, mother, and eight sons and daughters filled the little inconvenient house in Sloane Square, and we were very happy together. One anxiety only rested upon us. The health of our sister Caroline, a sweet, thoughtful girl of fifteen, was the cloud in our sky, threatening our bright home with its shadow. During the winter her ailment developed into unmistakable consumption. The month of May is the time when the spoils of winter are gathered and borne away, and our dear sister Caroline left us then.

In youth I died, in maiden bloom,
With gentle hand Death touched my cheek.

In March, 1854, Harry gained his scholarship, and almost immediately went into residence at Corpus Christi College, Oxford.

CHAPTER III

1853-1857

Removal to London—St. Peter's Collegiate School—My Inner Life
—A Year in Jersey—Letters from My Mother—Burne-Jones,
William Morris and Rossetti—Nights at Red Lion Square.

OUR removal to London in September, 1853, when my father became superintendent of the Chelsea Circuit and minister of Sloane Terrace Chapel, was an event of much importance in our family history. Our horizon was now greatly widened, and we came under new influences and conditions of life. My brother Harry remained in Birmingham to continue his course at King Edward's School till the time should come for his going up to Oxford. The rest of us, father, mother, and children, found ourselves, with much pleasure and some discomfort, packed into a small house on the south side of Sloane Square.

The London of 1853 lies far behind us now, separated from the London of to-day not only by more than sixty years of time, but by extension and transformation perhaps without parallel in the history of great cities. Its central portions have been practically rebuilt ; the suburbs of those days are suburbs no longer, and its ever advancing boundaries have been pushed far into the heart of five counties. No Thames Embankment then stretched along the river-side ; no Holborn Viaduct bridged the valley of the Fleet ; Temple Bar was still standing, and a network of courts and alleys

covered the ground now occupied by the Law Courts. There were no wood or asphalt pavements, and the omnibus, which elderly and old-fashioned people still spoke of as "the stage," rattled over cobble stones with no fear of competition from tramcars and motor-vehicles. The first excavation for the Underground Railway had yet to be made. At Westminster the new Houses of Parliament were slowly approaching completion, and on Sydenham Hill the Crystal Palace, which had done duty in Hyde Park at the great exhibition of 1851, was being set up as a kind of symbol of the millennium of peace, prosperity, and the liberal arts which everyone supposed had begun. I well remember walking with my brother from Chelsea to Sydenham and back on a fine afternoon in 1854, to see the yet unfinished building of glass and iron, the novelty of its design and materials according well, as it seemed, with the new hopes and aspirations it was intended to express. It was a long walk for a boy of twelve, and I was tired enough when, on our return, we found that we had not between us the necessary pence to pay the toll at Vauxhall Bridge. We were indebted to a genial farmer for a lift in his cart. "It will save you the toll, anyhow," said he as he bade us get in. "To tell you the truth," said my brother, with his usual conscientiousness and desire for accuracy in all things, "that is the precise reason why we asked you for a ride."

Chelsea, if not exactly rural, had not quite lost its rural memories when we went to live there. Cheyne Walk had still an eighteenth-century look, and old mansions, such as Gough House and Durham

House, preserved still earlier traditions. No one had as yet thought of rebuilding Sloane Square, and Lower Sloane Street had shabby little cottages on either side with dissolute-looking gardens before them, where tall mansions and expensive flats now stand. The King's Road was a stirring thoroughfare, though the traffic would appear small indeed compared with what it is now. As the highway to Cremorne Gardens, then in the flush of their not very reputable prosperity, it was apt to become noisy and disorderly in the evening, things often culminating in something like riot towards the small hours of the morning. The Queen and Prince Albert used frequently to drive through Sloane Square on their way to or from Buckingham Palace and Kew, and it was my frequent joy to take off my cap to them as they passed.

My imagination had been prepared for the glories of London by what I had heard and read as a child, and after a few preliminary walks with my father, I was left much to my own devices in finding my way about and seeing what was to be seen. So I visited Westminster Abbey, and the Tower, and the Whispering Gallery of St. Paul's. I became familiar with the great statue of Wellington on horseback at the head of Constitution Hill, and with old Northumberland House and the lion on the top of it, with the closed shutters of Apsley House, and, seen dimly through the trees, the fascinating red brick and stone facings of Holland House and Kensington Palace. I explored Seven Dials in its unregenerate days, as well as the calm respectability of the streets and squares that bear the names of Russell, and Bedford, and seem to

be aware of it. Of course, I ascended the Monument—that was one of the recognised pleasures, or dissipations, shall I say?—of London sixty years ago, and, rarer privilege, I was taken by a friend on the architect's staff to the top of the Westminster Clock Tower. Big Ben had recently been put in position, and I crawled under the rim and stood upright within the great bell while it struck four, losing my hearing thereby for a while, and running the risk of losing it entirely.

A boy who can push his way through a crowd may see many things if he will, and so I had a sight of the Emperor and Empress of the French when they visited London in April, 1855, and a good view of the illuminations and fireworks which marked the close of the Crimean War the following year. When the shattered remnant of the Brigade of Guards returned from the Crimea, and half London was in the streets to give them welcome, I kept up with the gallant fellows all the way from Waterloo Bridge to Buckingham Palace, the tears running down my face as I pushed along through all obstacles, cheering with such voice as I had. Then, as though to give to my sense of British citizenship fuller vitality and emotional strength, came the dark days of the Indian Mutiny, lit up for us by the heroic faith and courage of our fellow-countrymen and women at Lucknow and Cawnpore. My boyish heart was stirred to its depths, and a love of my country planted there that has never died. A boy is a strange, crude, contradictory being, whose thoughts and feelings can never be reduced to formula, but I believe the strongest growths of the human soul are from seed that is

very early sown, and a boy's heart is good seed-ground.

My three years at St. Peter's School were good and fruitful ones, and the memory of them is pleasant. I liked my masters and my schoolfellows, and enjoyed both my work and the recreations with which it was varied. Sports had not then the place in a school's programme that they now have, and Eaton Square was not exactly the place for a cricket-ground or playing-field. But we played rough games in our small, paved playground, and thumped and hustled one another with much good temper—not greatly interfered with by an occasional fight. So my recreations for the most part lay away from school, and were more closely connected with my home-life than is often the case with schoolboys. A few of us formed ourselves into a literary society, and met from time to time at each other's houses to read essays, and on Saturday afternoons we indulged in single-stick and boxing in a garden convenient for the purpose.

But I should have mentioned our more serious schoolwork first. The teaching on the classical side was good, on the mathematical side not so good, and for my lifelong indifference to mathematics I divide the blame between my natural inaptitude for them, and the absence of any stimulus from my teachers. It was otherwise with classics. The spirit and tradition of the school favoured them, and something in my own mental formation responded thereto. I now began Greek, and soon overtook some who had had a good start of me, though then and always I preferred Latin. The

first Greek I read was that of the New Testament, followed by Xenophon, Homer, and Herodotus. In Latin Cæsar, Virgil, Horace, Cicero and Livy were our authors, and the study of them was of great benefit to me, both direct and indirect. The circumstances of my life have not been favourable to my becoming a scholar, but such knowledge of the classics as I have, and the sentiments and sympathies they have nourished, have been among my chief sources of pleasure until now.

Our head master, Dr. John Wilson, familiarly referred to among us as "Jock," was easy-going and friendly in his dealings with us, but subject to wrathful outbursts now and again, for which, I doubt not, there was ample justification. On a hot summer afternoon, after a midday dinner, he would occasionally fall asleep while taking a class in his study. Any sign of oncoming slumber was by us carefully encouraged. We suppressed all needless noise, and did our repetition in a monotonous and droning tone that would assist his drowsiness, and help to close his eyes. Then the comedy began—comedy liable to be turned into instant tragedy by his sudden waking—the hardier ones among us pulling faces at him, or shaking their fists within an inch or two of his nose, and this, as they well knew, at imminent risk of their skins. The crowning venture on one such occasion was the gentle lifting of his college cap from his head and putting it on again wrong way before. This was successfully accomplished, and when the worthy doctor awoke he hastily readjusted it, apparently blaming his own absence of mind, and at once calling, "Next boy."

Dr. Wilson had a houseful of boarders, and was also incumbent of a non-parochial church in Knightsbridge, so that he was a busy man. I do not know anything of his University career, but he was a sufficiently good scholar and a capable schoolmaster. He was kind and courteous in such dealings as he had with my father, and was good enough to arrange that I should be received on the special terms granted to the sons of clergymen. Neither with him nor with his clerical colleagues was I ever at any disadvantage as a Methodist preacher's son. I think, indeed, that the contrary was the case. When I had risen to a fairly good position in the upper school, I was called upon perhaps more frequently than any other boy to read the evening Lesson. The day's work was always closed with the reading of a chapter by one of the boys, and the "General Thanksgiving," the Collect, "Lighten our darkness, we beseech Thee, O Lord," and the Benediction by the head master. These prayers, repeated daily, instead of losing anything by their so frequent use, took possession of my mind and memory, and gathered to themselves associations that have become increasingly tender and sacred as the years have passed. From my boyhood to the present time they have been with me companions of my pilgrimage.

After a few months in the cramped, uncomfortable house in Sloane Square we removed to a much more commodious and pleasant one in Walpole Street, in close neighbourhood to the Royal Hospital, the picturesque home of the Chelsea Pensioners, themselves the most picturesque

of Chelsea's inhabitants. On Sundays and high days, when they wore their cocked hats and scarlet overcoats, they were good to look at, and made one think of Wellington and Marlborough, of battles in India and campaigns in the Low Countries. This home soon became dear to us, and the memory of it is still pleasant to those of us who remember it.

I have now to speak of something even more important to me than the progress of my studies and general mental development during the years spent at St. Peter's School. I shall do so with reserve, but to pass it by altogether would be to say nothing of the master-influence and determining factor in my life.

From a child I was religiously susceptible. I cannot remember the time when I was not so. "Heaven lay around me in my infancy," not only in the example and teaching of my parents, but in an enveloping atmosphere of thought and feeling through which "bright shoots of everlastingness" and "shadows of eternity" would visit me. I was not exactly a pious child, certainly not a saintly one, but I was very early aware of God. He was quite real to me, and I knew that I had to do with Him. I had no religious difficulties such as make some children beat against the bars of life, and wonder fiercely why things are as they are. Such difficulties as I had were the ordinary irreligious ones, the common faults, that is, and tendencies to wrongdoing. I had spiritual quickenings and visitations that brought me under the power of the unseen, and at the same time made me aware that in this visible sphere of things I was very far from what I ought to be. I had no desire to put

God out of my thoughts—I had indeed neither the wish nor the power to do so ; He was there, constantly there ; but I felt more and more strongly that there was something wrong in my relation to Him, and I alternately longed for it to be set right, and shrank from what that might involve. The main current of my youthful religion, such as it was, had its springs and ran in the channels of my home life ; but after a while it was affected by certain influences connected with the church of which my father was minister.

Sloane Terrace Chapel was a good specimen of a Methodist chapel of the mid-nineteenth century. The congregation was large, and the strength of it lay in the excellent, steady-going, middle-class families who were regular attendants, supported its various organisations, and took part in Christian work of one kind and another. In their social life they were kindly and hospitable, and we young people found among them many friends and pleasant acquaintances. There was nothing very heroic or high-pitched in the spiritual life of the church, but it was honest and wholesome. If the rapturous note of the earliest Methodism was no longer heard—and what church has the dew of its youth for ever upon it?—and if the myriad activities of the present day were not yet in being, I have good reason to know that the Methodism of the early 'fifties had something with which to appeal to a young and eager soul, something to offer that could satisfy its desire. The service that it rendered to me was its insistence upon a definite and decisive acceptance of Jesus Christ as my Saviour and Master. I must graft on to Him, and henceforth draw the strength of

my life from Him Who is the Life. My father's preaching was by far the strongest and most impressive that I was in the habit of hearing, but it was sustained and followed up by that of his colleagues ; and after being for a considerable time "almost persuaded," my persuasion became full and final. By no means suddenly, but by degrees, through stages of God's guidance and teaching, I came into the faith in which I have lived from that time to this. A little later on it was to determine my calling and work in the world, and, in spite of circumstances that seemed to indicate for me another line of life, to draw me into the Christian ministry. But that was not yet above the horizon. Meanwhile, with many defects of character, and nothing in the shape of religious precocity, I sought to live the Christian life, finding it to be in some respects much easier, and in others far more difficult than I had imagined.

In the summer of 1856, when my father's term of three years in Chelsea was drawing to a close and he was about to remove to a new sphere of work between Oxford Street and Regent's Park, I was sent to school in Jersey. The school was a continuation of that formerly kept by Mr. Hoskins, to which brief reference has already been made. Mr. Patrick Neill, who had married Mr. Hoskins's daughter, was now proprietor and head master, a man of high character, a disciplinarian, and a good teacher. My father had a very high opinion of him, and in a recent visit to Jersey had been favourably impressed with the school. To go from St. Peter's to a private school seemed, educationally speaking, a step backward, but there were con-

siderations that prevailed. It was thought that it would be beneficial to my health to spend a year in Jersey ; and the opportunity of acquiring a good command of colloquial French counted for much. Moreover, though little was said on the subject, it marked the abandonment of the hope hitherto cherished both by my father and by myself, and even more strongly by my brother, that I should in due course go to Oxford. It had become evident that my father could not a second time meet the expense of sending a son to the university. Even if, like my brother, I should succeed in gaining a scholarship, a university career for me would involve expenditure that he could not possibly undertake to meet. So the thought of it was quietly dropped, although no definite plan took its place. Meanwhile, a year under Mr. Neill's vigorous tuition, a healthy life in the country, and the probable acquisition of a language that might be very useful, were reasons enough in favour of the Jersey scheme, and thither, accordingly, I was sent.

On the whole, I think, the decision was justified by events. My health benefited by my residence in Jersey, and I got a hold of French, in which I had previously been well-grounded, such as probably I should not have otherwise obtained. In after years it came to be of much service to me in many ways. It was hoped that some aptitude for mathematics might be discovered, or implanted in me by M. Rouch, our very capable mathematical master, but it was not so. I read Virgil and Livy, Homer and Sophocles, with Mr. Neill, was indifferently successful in writing Latin prose, and for

my own amusement read Racine and Molière, and vast quantities of Dumas and Victor Hugo. We lived somewhat meagrely, worked fairly hard, and were reasonably happy. Most of my schoolfellows were natives of Jersey or Guernsey, and small as my world had been, it was larger than theirs. With few exceptions we came from Methodist families, and we attended morning service at the English and French Methodist chapels, sometimes the one and sometimes the other. We neither played cricket nor football, but were well drilled and taught gymnastics by M. Rouch, an accomplished athlete of the French type. There was some mystery about him, to our minds at least. We were persuaded that he was an exile in hiding, that he had committed some great political crime, had probably assassinated a tyrant, and was, in particular, the personal enemy of Napoleon III., then in the height of his power. We liked to think these things of him, and as we watched him sitting at his desk, twisting his moustache, and apparently far away in thought, we felt sure they were true. The routine of our school life was somewhat dull and uneventful, but on one side at least a few of us found an outlet for the adventurousness that had so little lawful scope. We occupied a bedroom on the ground-floor from which it was easy to get out of the window, and oft in the still night we made perilous journeys. In a farmhouse about half a mile away lived an old couple and their charming daughter. The latter was the idol of the school, and few things made us happier than the sight of her and a few kind words from her. The farmhouse had an unfailing store of apples and a wealth of apple-pies,

and she had a generous hand. She was old enough to treat us as schoolboys and nothing more, and young enough to enjoy our admiration and to be in sympathy with our ever-craving appetites. As the daily programme of our meals did not include supper, it would often happen that we were hungrier after going to bed than we had been all through the day. So when nights were dark, and the hour not yet too late for such an expedition, encouraged and urged thereto by comrades who would share any benefit or punishment that might follow, I would dress, get gently out of the window, and in my slippers—for all boots were left in the boot-room on our way to bed—creep down the lane and across a field or two, and was soon tapping humbly at the farmhouse door. The angel of the house would let me in, and the old farmer would say to me in his Jersey French: “Ah! Mr. Neill will catch you one of these fine nights, and then you will swallow the stick—*voilà!*” And then to his daughter: “Marie, make haste with the apple-pie, *vite!*” And Marie would bring me apple-pie and a glass of milk, and give me pie and cakes for the hungry crew I had left behind me, and tell me I was sure to be caught and caned, and she hoped it would do me good. Then she would gravely kiss me, and turn me out into the dark night a full and happy boy.

During the year I spent in Jersey my letters from home were a great source of happiness. My parents, my sisters, my brother—all were good correspondents, and amongst them kept me well in touch with the family life. That life was now transferred from Chelsea to Marylebone, from our

cheerful house in Walpole Street to an older and dingier one in Beaumont Street, and was established there some ten months before I crossed its threshold. An elder sister was my most regular correspondent. She was wise and good beyond her years, and was my spiritual directress, writing me a pastoral letter every week. These letters did much to help me. She knew my weaknesses and besetments and where a gentle warning or a word of encouragement would be timely, and as she had a ready pen she just wrote the things she would have said to me had we been together. I have her letters still. I have never shown them to anyone, and shall not quote from them here.

My mother's letters portray the family life in much detail, and reveal many of the qualities of her own mind and heart. To me also they suggest the touch of sadness that was never very far away from even her brightest moments. Her health was delicate and her spirit sensitive, and she felt the strain of a life that was not in all its details congenial to her. But her courage, her resourcefulness, and her trust in God never failed. These carried her through trials that would have worn down many a stronger woman, and kept in check the depression that often assailed her, and the bitterness of spirit to which otherwise she might have given way.

Under this date my mother wrote :

WALPOLE STREET.

Sept. 1st, 1856.

I wish, my dear fellow, you could be conscious of the deep solicitude and tender love that I feel for you when I

have not time or power to put it into words. We were so busy all last week that I could not write to you ; my mind has been bordering upon distraction with the multiplicity of my cares. This removing is a growing (I was going to say evil) burden, and I think sometimes I shall sink under it—unless, indeed, I never find time to do so.

Yesterday your dear father preached his last two sermons at Sloane Terrace to crowded and deeply serious congregations. I should have liked all my children to have been there with me. We shall remove on Thursday, when this lovely house will be left as clean and nice as all our united effort can make it, and then it will be taken possession of by one gentleman, his wife being at a distance with an afflicted sister. It makes my heart sad to think that the house which has been the scene of so many sorrows and so many blessings must become the home of a stranger who can have no sympathy with any of the events which have cheered or troubled us.

Since the death of your dear sister my room has been sacred in my eyes as the last spot upon earth which her presence brightened, and more sacred still as the spot from which she took her flight to the kingdom and glory of heaven. Oh ! how often have I knelt by the side of the bed since then, sometimes agonising in prayer for entire submission to a loss that still wrings my heart, sometimes thanking God that He had so gently taken her from the evil that is in the world. It adds bitterness to my feelings in leaving this house that no future one can have any association with her.

I think I have something of the limpet in my constitution, if I may judge by the violence done to my feelings when I am torn from my rock.

. . . My hopes are centred in my children. I earnestly pray that I may see you all walking in the truth. Nothing that this world could give can satisfy the ambition of the soul. Nothing finite or material can make the happiness

of an immortal spirit. Seek, then, my dear son, for the peace that the world can neither give nor take away.

To this last letter which my mother wrote me from Walpole Street I may add an extract from the first I received from her after the removal to Beaumont Street :

BEAUMONT STREET.

Sept. 29th, 1856.

If you can imagine a house in a state of utter confusion and disorder, many degrees transcending anything you ever saw, you may perhaps form some conception of things here. Whitewashing, papering, joinering, blacksmith's work and glazier's repairs, mingle with washing, sweeping, rubbing, scrubbing, arranging and disarranging, and form a whole so discordant that order and decorum seem to have taken flight in terror. Be thankful, my boy, that you are out of the muddle (I know no other word for it), for I know not when it will come to an end. . . . This is a very old house, and it has evidently suffered an amount of neglect sufficient to break the heart of anything but an old house. I do not despair, however, of making the poor old thing look something younger and much more cheerful before I have done with it. . . . I began this letter last Wednesday ; now I must finish. We have not yet got rid of the whitewashers, but we hope soon to be right and straight. After all that we have gone through here, I should scarcely despair of driving a camel through the eye of a needle.

It would comfort you if you could hear your dear father's daily prayers for you. May they all be answered !

Nearly a month later, from Beaumont Street, my mother wrote :

October 20th, 1856.

I have had much enjoyment of life, many blessings and temporal comforts ; I have been favoured beyond

many with the love of parents, brothers, sisters, husband, children and friends, but I can assure you that all these (precious as they are) fail to support and satisfy the soul unless the favour and love of God be added. Nothing here is permanent, all things are passing away or changing ; there is only One who is " the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever." He says, " I am the Lord. I change not," and to Him I commend you, my dear son, praying that you may be His servant, faithful unto death ; and He will give you a crown of life. . . .

Mr. Fulford is expecting to be ordained next Sunday, and his curacy will be at Camden Town. Mr. Edward (Burne-Jones) has lately removed with Mr. Morris to Red Lion Square, where they have very noble rooms. We are engaged to spend next Wednesday evening there.

A few extracts from my brother's letters this year will show his affectionate interest in my doings. His authoritative way with me, which in younger days I had sometimes resented, is now seen at its best in his counsels as to my work and behaviour.

From C.C.C., Oxford, Harry wrote on Nov. 7th, 1856 :

Try not to grumble about the school, though I think nine and a half hours are too many. And as for the morning school, please to remember that all the time I was at Sheffield we rose at six, and were in school for an hour at half-past six. Now Sheffield is about six degrees north of Jersey ; so you may fancy it was a good deal colder there, and so it was. Sheffield is not a warm place in winter. What glorious games at football we used to have from half-past seven till eight ! Wesley College was a jolly place. All the same, let off your steam by writing an additional stanza to Poe's *Bells*.

I hope your meeting in class may answer the end for

which class was appointed, namely, strengthen you by religious communion for the ordinary duties of life. Remember that still it is an affair between God and you alone; and religion, to be worth anything, must stick to a man more closely than his skin.

Dixon is in the schools, and doing, I hope, very fairly. It remains to be seen what he will get. Fulford is here, attending divinity lectures preparatory to ordination.

Decr. 24th, 1856.

I am going to send you the Riddle's Latin dictionary which Fulford gave you. Last Wednesday we all went to Morris's and Jones's new rooms at 17 Red Lion Square, very jolly large rooms on the first floor. Dixon, Fulford, and Hatch were there too. We had a pleasant evening.

January 5th, 1857.

I am sorry you could not be at the Watch-night, as I am sure you would have enjoyed it; we did not forget to pray for you. Nor are you ever forgotten, or I believe unmentioned at family prayers.

On Saturday I had a letter from Lelièvre, who is in Switzerland; they were expecting the Prussians to march against them with 140,000 men on the second or third of this month, but as there is no mention of it, so far as I know, in *The Times* of this morning, I hope negotiations have still continued. You have heard, I suppose, about the quarrel between the King of Prussia and the Swiss about Neuchatel; I hope war may not ensue, but if it does, that the Prussians may be annihilated, with all else who voluntarily insult and then attack the Swiss.

Write to me in French, if you feel at all disposed to do so. Don't forget to read your Bible and to pray, besides saying your prayers, every day, busy or idle.

My year in Jersey, which dragged somewhat heavily with me towards its close, came to an end,

and I joyfully returned home in June, 1857. Shortly before doing so, I wrote to my father :

For the last three weeks I have been revising all that I have read since I came here. My list is as follows : Cicero : the four orations *In Catilinam* ; the *pro lege Maniliâ* ; the *pro Archiâ Poetâ* ; and the *Somnium Scipionis*. Horace : three books of the odes, and the *Ars Poetica*. Livy : Book XXI., and 12 chapters of Book XXII. Virgil : second book of the *Æneid*, and first two eclogues of the *Bucolics*.

In Greek, three books of Xenophon's *Anabasis*. Thucydides : part of Book VII. Herodotus : parts of Books I. and VI. ; and the *Philoctetes* of Sophocles, unfinished. Greek Testament.

In French, I think I have made great progress ; M. Rouch says, " Very great." He said that it was evident that I had learnt French as I would Latin or Greek, but not to speak it, and when I came my ear was so unaccustomed to the sound of it that I could with difficulty understand a single sentence. I have not grown very much, and do not expect to be a son of Anak. However, I am stronger than many who are bigger than myself, which is an advantage not to be despised.

My return to London in the summer of 1857 seemed to bring me into life's main track again. The year spent in Jersey was a sort of divergence from it, separating me from my chief interests, and from the persons and things I cared for most. To these I was now restored. I took my place again in our close-knit family life, and found that while it had lost nothing of its characteristic features it was enriched and strengthened by certain new elements, and by mental developments of an important kind.

I have spoken of the beginning of our acquaintance with some of my brother's Birmingham schoolfellows. The friendships then formed had no uniform course or destiny. Some soon reached their height and then gradually died down ; others were to last as long as life itself, and gather strength and sacredness to the very end. But one there was of the little company—whom I may be excused for calling the rarest, finest spirit of them all—who was to become more to us than words can say, the dearest of friends and brothers, our pride and delight for more than forty years. Edward Burne-Jones became engaged to my sister Georgiana shortly before I left home for Jersey, and long before my return he had grown into the heart of the family and was naturalised among us. He had always been kind to me, but now I came into closer and more intimate relations with him. I was at the age for hero-worship in its most ardent and least sophisticated form, and he was my hero. In this hero-worship I had fellow-votaries in the other members of the family. He was then, it should be remembered, an unknown man, and the only halo that he wore was that of the love and admiration of a few friends, for the most part as undistinguished as himself. Our estimate of him was entirely our own, and though he had as yet done nothing to indicate the quality and measure of his genius, we were as sure of him as we were of our own souls. He had the ascendancy over us of intellectual power associated with strong convictions, high enthusiasm, and a lovableness that could not be resisted. Moreover, the door through which all things entered his mind, or came

out from it, was the Gate Beautiful. With most of us, perhaps, the sense of the beautiful is imperfectly developed and largely conventional, with him it was intense, instinctive, and wholly unconventional.

In nature and in art, in literature and in life, he looked for beauty and found it where to many it is invisible or but dimly discerned, rejecting much that had somehow come to be considered beautiful but was not so. "He gave us eyes," or at least helped us to see that "Beauty is truth, truth beauty," though it would have been very unlike him to take a text, even from Keats, and expound it for our benefit, for while he was one of the most inspiring, he was one of the least didactic of teachers.

He would show us pictures and prints and engravings, and photographs of sculpture and carved work, and tell us what was good and why it was so, and what was bad and altogether detestable; and this he did not in a formal way, but with accompaniment of infinite jest, with parody and caricature and exaggeration inconceivable. Since the publication of the *Memorials* his admirers have known that the painter whose art moves in worlds that humour never enters found endless fun in daily life. Humour more quick and quaint and tricky than his could hardly be. He loved a joke, not of the clever kind, but of the sort that had most fun in it, and if it was something of the nature of a practical joke, so much the better. This happy liking he retained through life, curiously associated as it was with the fundamental seriousness of his mind. I think I am right in saying that in the whole range of his art work there is

no suggestion of the humour that was so large and lovable an element of his nature. It is not necessary for me to explain or to defend its consistent exclusion from his art. I believe it was at once instinctive and deliberate. In familiar letter-writing and in social intercourse his pen ran readily to caricature, and to drawings that were exquisitely funny, but never a touch of this is to be found in the whole domain of his work. We get near to his mind on the subject in a passage that I may quote from the *Memorials*:

Indeed and indeed, wit is the opposite pole to poetry—not fun, but wit—I'll go to the stake on that. It keeps people from being pedants or bores, I think, and there lies its chief use. But some of the greatest beings ever born had none—nor humour either, and I often reflect that the books I most worship are as devoid of it as the paintings I worship. None in Homer, none in Æschylus or Dante, none in the *Morte d'Arthur*. It isn't necessary—and though it betters a second-rate creature very much, and makes a first-rate one better company for the passing hour, it affects great work, I think, very little indeed.

But thoughts of this kind did not trouble us at the time of which I am writing. “Mr. Edward's” coming brought sunshine into the house and joy into our hearts, and if I could not enter into all that he said about Rossetti and Ruskin, I contributed to the paroxysms of laughter caused by his descriptions of more or less apochryphal scenes and adventures.

The rooms in Red Lion Square, jointly occupied by Burne-Jones and William Morris between 1856 and 1858, were enchanted ground to me, a kind

of paradise where I seemed to breathe another air, and converse with other beings than those to be found in the world outside. The house was an old one, early eighteenth century, I should say, at the latest, and the studio on the first floor was a large three-windowed room well suited for its uses. It was generally in a state of noble confusion—massive furniture of Morris's design, old pieces of metal-work, easels, canvases mounted on wooden frames, armour, lay-figures, pieces of tapestry and drapery, half-finished pictures, sketch-books, bits of Flemish or Italian earthenware, with here and there a hat, or coat, or pair of boots. Near the fire-place was something like a clearing—an open space, as it were, in the forest or jungle—with a table and chairs for joyous meals, and for genial converse when work was done.

I have elsewhere referred to these happy days in notes, from which I may quote :

I had the privilege of going in and out among a group of men who were the objects of my admiration and delight, an admiration not unmingled with awe, a delight that transcended all other pleasures natural to my age. Circumstances had brought me within their orbit—a small, unrealised asteroid whom these greater heavenly bodies drew in their train. I was too young to be taken seriously by any of them, too young for companionship in the full sense of the term, but I was allowed to be often among them in working hours and in jovial evenings. So I stood by their easels and watched them paint ; I drank in their talk, finding their sense and their nonsense equally bright and good ; and had kindly notice from them that was in various ways an inspiration and a joy to me. Many of my predilections in literature, and such conceptions of

art as I have been able to form, had their rise in those days and under their influence, and the early bias has never been wholly lost.

Many hours did I spend with him (Burne-Jones) in his studio in Red Lion Square when he was painting the story from Chaucer of the Christian child who angered the Jews by singing a hymn to the Virgin on his way to and from school, and was slain and cast into a pit for so doing, and continued to sing his hymn until the people heard it and took up his martyred body. As he worked at his picture he would keep up a rhythmic repetition of the lines :

“ He Alma Redemptoris ’gan to sing
So loud that all the place ’gan to ring.”

Among the greatest, the most unforgettable names associated in my mind with Red Lion Square are those of Morris and Rossetti. These I often used to meet, and, less often, Madox Brown, Arthur Hughes, and Valentine Prinsep.

Of Rossetti it was particularly true that you must love him in order to understand him. Difficult, indeed, he was, even in his earliest and best days, but along with it was a power of fascination that few could resist. My remembrance of him goes back to the time when it was at its height, and he was the undisputed sovereign of the group of which he was the central personality. He was very kind to me, and was good enough to prophesy for me a brilliant career in a line of life far removed from that which I have followed. “Born to raise the fallen fortunes of the British stage,” was his reading of my horoscope. But as I was at the time divided in my desires between going to sea and qualifying for the Bar, his mistaken diagnosis of my case may be forgiven. Anyway, it was genial and kindly in its spirit.

None, however, of the gifted and attractive men I met at Red Lion Square imperilled for a

moment, so far as I was concerned, the supremacy of Burne-Jones. He was more to me in every way than any of them could ever be. Greatly as I enjoyed an evening at his studio in their company, I prized still more the times I spent with him alone. Naturally he was much at our house in Beaumont Street, and when the hour arrived when my orderly and punctual father would suggest that it was time for him to go, I was sometimes allowed to go home and spend the night with him. Nothing could be more to my mind. Often did we "hear the chimes at midnight," sometimes as we walked the long length of Oxford Street, at others after reaching the old house in the square. Then for an hour or two things were at their best. In the dimly-lighted studio, full of shapeless objects and black shadows, he would tell me the weirdest, ghastliest stories he knew, raked from old French and Italian sources, rich in horrors natural and supernatural, in white ladies, red knights, and black monks, in cord and dagger, and poison-bowl, in snakes that crawled, and birds that screeched, and beasts that supped on human flesh, the spell being sometimes suddenly broken by some shattering absurdity and roars of laughter from us both. One story he was continually promising to tell me, but never did, for, as he said, "He who tells that story often goes mad in the telling of it, and he who hears it *always does.*"

Sometimes we snatched a fearful joy in the small hours of the morning by playing a game that we called "The Mexican Duel." It was a nerve-racking business. First, we turned off all light, and during a moment or two of truce secured

such strategic positions as we thought best. Then, in perfect silence, we set ourselves each to discover the other and pounce upon him with a yell. One would put an ear to the floor for minutes together to hear, if possible, some slightest sound that would betray the enemy. Then on hands and knees, or full length upon the floor, one would crawl slowly and warily in search of him, holding one's breath and avoiding contact with the many obstacles scattered around until, if things went well, one could take him unawares and jump on him with a shout of triumph. Burne-Jones was an adept at this wily game. Once, I remember, after half an hour or more of painful, ineffectual effort to find him, I called out that I was tired of it and would play no more. I got no answer. "It's no use lying low," I said, "the game's over—let us go to bed." But still there was dead silence. For a moment the thought that he had had a fit, or had suddenly died, crossed my mind, and I called to him again. As I got no answer I made my way to the door which led into the bedroom, making noise as I went and abusing him for his unnatural silence. Having reached the bedroom, still in the dark, I hastily undressed and crept into the bed that he shared with me—and there he was! Having started me some half-hour previously on the silent war-path, he had crept straight to his room and gone to bed, where he nearly swallowed the pillow in suppressing his laughter at the success of his joke.

CHAPTER IV

1857-1860

The Question of My Future—An Accountant's Office—the Chelsea Athenæum—My First Lecture—Hinde Street Chapel—My Spiritual Pastors and Masters—The Influence of Morley Punshon—Drawn Towards the Ministry.

THE question of my future, or at least of some line of things with reasonable promise of a future, had now to be faced. The vision of the university having faded away, something must needs be found to take its place ; and it was an uncle on my mother's side, Mr. Edmund Pullein, who, for a time at all events, solved the problem. He was in partnership with Mr. Harding, subsequently Sir Robert Palmer Harding, as an accountant. The firm of Harding and Pullein stood high in the profession, as indeed it does still, though under another name. It had an office in the City for the more commercial part of the business, and another in Serle Street, Lincoln's Inn, chiefly devoted to the winding-up of joint-stock companies under the direction of the Court of Chancery, and to Serle Street I was sent. I entered upon my duties in good spirits, not knowing that I had very little aptitude for the kind of work done there, and that it would only afford me blind-alley employment, leading to nothing. It is certain that the two years or more I spent at Serle Street did not make an accountant of me, but I learnt there some things that have been of use ; and on the side of my duties

that brought me into contact with law and lawyers, I received impressions and quickenings that I would not be without. I still recall with pleasure the days I spent in the courts where Vice-Chancellors Kindersley and Page-Wood were on the Bench, and Lords Justices Knight-Bruce and Turner heard appeals, and Sir Hugh Cairns and Sir Roundell Palmer were at the Bar. Balance-sheets and bankruptcy accounts left me unmoved, but a judgment or a speech in court was another thing, and would set me wondering whether in the legal world whose fringe I was now touching there might not be a place for me.

In our office staff various types of life and character were represented. Amongst my fellow-clerks were sober and steady men who had been in the service for years, working hard on incredibly small salaries, and others whose stay was short and their departure sudden. Some were ignorant and dull, and others dangerously clever. One or two were unmistakably religious, the majority unmistakably not so. Amongst my more picturesque companions of the desk were, an insolvent publican of almost majestic appearance and manners; a stage-smitten aspirant for theatrical honours; a mysterious little Irishman with a beautiful tenor voice, who, as it turned out, was wanted by the police; and a stout old Scotchman who seemed to live on whisky, strong tobacco, and still stronger cheese. On quiet sleepy afternoons in the Long Vacation, when the courts were closed and the heads of the office were taking holiday, the tedium of things was lightened by songs, recitations, and practical jokes. All this was not very exalted or

improving, but there was general good nature and friendliness in the queerly assorted company, and when anyone was ill or in trouble there was sure to be a subscription on his behalf. I was fond at the time of finding literary prototypes for those around me, and I discovered in one of my associates an unmistakable Dick Swiveller, and in another more than a suggestion of Mr. Micawber.

One friend I had in the office whom I used to visit from time to time at his home in Highbury. Mr. Ryle, the cashier and confidential clerk of the principals, showed me much kindness, and took an interest in the thoughts and fancies that I opened out to him when opportunity afforded. To him I owe a certain link that connects me, however remotely, with Charles and Mary Lamb. His father, whom I used to meet at his house, was a fellow-clerk of Lamb's at the India House, and his co-executor with Talfourd. I liked to shake the hand that had often grasped that of Lamb and of his beloved sister, and to think that the quiet old gentleman with whom I took tea had been their faithful and trusted friend. Mr. Ryle was a bachelor, and an old maiden aunt lived with him who in some respects reminded me of Mary Lamb, not at all in respect of the tragic side of her history or of her intellectual qualities, but by reason of her voluminous cap, and her homely, old-fashioned ways. She still spoke of the omnibus as the stage.

But during my years at Serle Street it was after office hours that life began for me, and the things I really cared for had their opportunity. These had their focus respectively in my home, in my

association with Hinde Street Chapel, and in a certain literary society at Chelsea of which I was a member. Chelsea had at that time something more of local life and character than it now has. Its population was more indigenous, and more conscious of its history and traditions. There was a homely provincialism about its people akin to that which may still be found in certain country towns, an old-fashioned flavour in Chelsea life generally which I suppose has now disappeared, though possibly something of it lingers among the older shopkeeping families, such of them as have not been crushed or crowded out by the all-conquering stores and great drapery firms of Knightsbridge and Kensington. It was a region in which small book societies flourished, and literary tea-parties to which young people were taken by their parents. At these gatherings someone would, perhaps, read aloud selections from Ruskin, or Carlyle, or Kingsley, or from Tennyson's "Princess"; or, if a minister were present, he would give an account of some new book, if theological so much the better. One of the young ladies would sing "Come into the Garden, Maud," or "Home they brought her Warrior Dead," after which a modest supper of cold chicken and a glass of sherry, and at ten o'clock or thereabout good nights were said. Surely there was intellectual life in Chelsea, and, as we shall see, it was capable of more ambitious things than these.

Early in 1859 a number of greatly daring youths, of whom I was one, formed a lecture and discussion society under the imposing title of the Chelsea Athenæum. Of the little company of its founders

and first members I believe I am now the sole survivor, and it is a pleasure, after all these years, to pay a tribute of kindly remembrance to my old companions. On every ground priority of mention belongs to our organising secretary, Horace Norfolk, to whom more than to anyone the society owed its existence. He was meant to be a projector of great undertakings, ambitious, enterprising, not easily abashed. Our little venture might have been the Royal Society, or the French Academy, so seriously did he take it. To him it owed its sounding title. Some meeker spirits had suggested that we should call ourselves the Chelsea Mutual Improvement Society, but he scouted the suggestion as unworthy, if not degrading, and insisted upon Chelsea Athenæum. We were not Sunday scholars or parish prentices, but young men of light and leading. Mutual improvement might, of course, be kept in mind, but must on no account be set forth as our principal aim. As for embodying it in the name of our association, such ostentatious humility was not to be thought of.

An article that appeared in the *Daily News* in January, 1860, when we celebrated our first anniversary by a *conversazione* at the South Kensington Museum, referred to us in language which, if not inspired by our secretary, must have had his full approval: "About a year since, the young denizens of Cheyne Walk, Chelsea, and its surroundings, determined upon erecting a temple to Pallas Athene somewhere in the district lying to the west of Sloane Square." This temple, I need hardly say, was not to be "the labour of an age in piled stones," but a spiritual

structure raised by our united intellectual resources. Our actual place of meeting was the schoolroom of Christ Church, a building by no means suggestive of the Parthenon. Failing in his attempt to secure Carlyle as our president, Norfolk was more successful with a list of patrons. He approached the aristocracy, he propitiated the clergy, and in the end drew handsomely upon the local representatives of literature and science. From among these we gained two good friends in Mr. Thomas Wright, scholar, antiquary and learned editor, and Mr. Robert Hunt, of the School of Mines, scientific writer and lecturer. These gentlemen would now and again take the chair at our meetings, doing their best for our encouragement, and suffering our eloquence patiently if not gladly.

George Farren was one of our most prominent and useful members, a little older than the rest of us, very energetic and enthusiastic, but matter-of-fact in the extreme. He was an engineer by profession, and took delight in granite quarries and reservoirs and in bridge building. I remember his seeking to prove to me by a geometrical drawing and with the help of a pair of compasses that the beauty of a certain face we both admired was due to the angle at which the nose was set upon it. He could always be relied on for a good paper when his turn came, and prepared his charts and plans with much labour and skill. Best of all, he was a cheery companion, and a loyal friend ever ready to do a kindness.

Henry Cundy was also a valued member of the Athenæum, and though he could never be induced to read a paper or give a lecture, he took

part occasionally in our discussions. He had a charming sister who sometimes accompanied him to the meetings. She had a tendency to sarcasm at our expense, and we held her notes and comments in wholesome awe. Cundy soon afterwards moved on to Oxford, took Orders, and spent many years as the rector of a quiet country parish. Then there was John Child, a Chelsea man born and bred, full of local knowledge and sentiment, and with a gift of dry humour that was well appreciated among us. At the other end of the scale so far as humour was concerned, for he was much too intense to allow scope for that genial quality, was Oxley, a keen-visaged youth with long hair, an uncompromising Radical, whose appearance and manner were as good as notice to all existing institutions that a time of reckoning was at hand. When he was on the warpath we had lively times. He would denounce things in general, and Church, State, and social conventions in particular, undiscouraged by the jeers and ironical applause he never failed to provoke. But we were excellent friends all round, opposed each other's views and ridiculed each other's arguments, expending such witticisms as we had at command on the speaker of the evening, his subject and his mode of handling it, and enjoyed ourselves immensely. There was not a genius among us, so far as I know, but we had the best of spirits, and in addition a few ideals and enthusiasms which our meetings helped to confirm. So the Chelsea Athenæum had its uses, and may be remembered with kindness.

After being a member of the Athenæum for a few weeks, I was invited to give a lecture, and

with a fortnight for the selection of a subject, and for preparation, I consented. In the light of after days, and of the course my life was to take, I cannot but think of the event as an important one. I had as yet no thought of the ministry as my vocation, but I had even then some instinct or aspiration towards public speaking. This was, I think, in my temperament from the first, for it had betrayed itself in a rudimentary sort of way while I was a schoolboy. But it was now beginning to press with something like urgency, and here was an opportunity of making a beginning. Moreover, certain influences were at work that fell in with my desires and increased them. Morley Punshon was then at the height of his fame as an orator. I had the honour of his acquaintance, and the pleasure of frequently hearing him both in the pulpit and on the platform, and was under the fascination of his eloquence. I had heard nothing like it before, and I have heard nothing like it since for the spell it cast upon his hearers. The ornate, rhythmical sentences, and the balanced periods sweeping on to the inevitable climax, were a magic that could not be resisted. To me it was a revelation and an inspiration, and I longed to discover the secret of his eloquence, and, if it might be, practise its methods and follow, at however great a distance, in his track. That way happiness appeared to me to lie, and distinction, and triumph.

All this was presumptuous and crude enough, but such was my state of mind when preparing my first lecture. It was not at all my intention to read a paper, but to deliver an oration. Not to plod through a manuscript with eyes fixed upon

the paper and voice decorously monotonous, but to ride on the wings of the wind, to "shake the arsenal and fulmine over Greece"—these were the thoughts that filled my seventeen-year-old bosom. I took for my subject "The Edinburgh Review and its Writers," not a very suitable one for a youth of my age, nor yet, it may be said, a very promising one for the oratorical venture I had in view. It came about in this way. We had in my father's house a long set of that famous quarterly, from its beginning in 1802 to 1845 or thereabout, and on these volumes I had browsed promiscuously, finding pasture here and there amongst much that was unreadable. This led me to seek information respecting its origin and history and principal contributors, and to my making some kind of acquaintance with Jeffrey, and Horner, and Brougham, with Sydney Smith and Mackintosh, with Macaulay and Carlyle. Brougham, Carlyle, and Macaulay were still living, great personages in the domain of literature, and impressed my imagination as such. Macaulay was to pass away before the year was out.

On the appointed evening I appeared upon the platform without the customary manuscript. I had written my lecture and committed it to memory, and I delivered it verbatim without the help of notes other than a few catchwords written on a card. I staked everything upon my memory, and it did not fail me. I launched upon the high seas, colours flying and all sails set. I had no misgivings, no qualified or hesitating judgments to offer, and was, in fact, sure of everything, of my facts and inferences, of my premises and conclusions.

I characterised whole periods of history and long trains of events in a sentence, or even in a word. I disparaged the eighteenth century and exalted the nineteenth, denounced tyrants, apostrophised liberty, and triumphantly assured my audience that the schoolmaster was abroad. I drew portraits of the reformers who had called into existence a great organ of political progress and intellectual light, the prophets who in the pages of the *Edinburgh Review* had proclaimed the millennium of extended franchise and popular education, of mechanics' institutes and savings banks. I served out Sydney Smith, as it were, in bucketsful, and turned on Macaulay as with a hose. The effect was all I had hoped for, and when, after dilating upon Macaulay the essayist, and Macaulay the orator, I recited "Horatius" from beginning to end, the chairman beamed approval, and the applause was loud and long. It is true that "Horatius" had little or nothing to do with my subject, and was of unconscionable length, but "time was made for slaves," not for orators, and moreover I already had it by heart and might never again have the opportunity of using it. So it was thrown in, a kind of bonus, something over and above the bargain—which surely no one could object to.

Doubtless there were those present who saw how thin and poor the whole thing was from first to last; but it was youth's golden hour, goodwill abounded, and no one cared to criticise a performance so happy in its non-perception of difficulties, so confident in this its first flight. Such was my first lecture, delivered in April, 1859, and I have been a lecturer, more or less, ever since, though

in the humbler methods and prosaic style of later years few would recognise the youth who flattered the Chelsea audience in those far-off days.

Meanwhile, other and deeper interests had their centre, as I have said, at Hinde Street Chapel. I had become a member of the Church while at school in Jersey, but the conditions there were not such as to do much for me. Happy is the youth who in the early days of his religious life finds himself in a quickening atmosphere, among those whose companionship is a stimulus to what is best in him, and encouragement and a help in the life he wants to live. All this and more I was to find at Hinde Street just at the time when it was of the highest value to me. I was fond of company, impressionable and readily affected by my surroundings, perhaps a little impatient of rules and regulations, and disposed to undervalue some of the safeguards usually prescribed for youth. Moreover, I had now to assimilate as best I could influences of various kinds whose place and proportion in my life were not yet settled. They were in some sense contending for the mastery, and it was not quite clear with which of them the ascendancy would lie. Could Methodism, for instance, hold its own with me among the many things now touching me at one point and another? Could the tradition received from my fathers stand the challenge of the new modes of thought of which I was aware, or the path they had trodden hold my feet when the vision of other paths leading, as it seemed, to lands of promise had dawned upon me? I thought within myself, "This is a wide and wonderful world, and the ways of living in

it are very many. Some of these are pleasanter to travel than others, and some companionships more inspiring ; some kinds of work enrich and gratify one's nature more than others do, and truth and beauty and excellence have higher as well as lower forms, and may not one choose among them, seeing that all things are possible ? " I did not quarrel with my daily duties at Serle Street, though I felt I was only " marking time " while performing them, but I was waiting for I knew not what, unsettled though not unhappy, and dreaming one dream after another of the great contents of the House of Life.

So it was perhaps rather a precarious stage of things that I had reached, when an adverse touch on this side or that might have sent me off on a mistaken quest, not to say a fool's pilgrimage ; or the absence of any effective influence from without might have left me without any guidance other than that of my own very crude ambitions and imaginings. The next year or two would in all probability determine many things, might possibly determine the essential aim of my whole after life. And so it happened. To the influences that had their centre in Hinde Street Chapel I owe it that I have spent my life in the Christian ministry.

What then did I find at Hinde Street during my association with the church there, with its public worship, its membership, and its social life ?

Some thirty years ago I answered that question to myself and to the readers of the " Life of Morley Punshon " by drawing upon memories that were fresh and keen, and are little less so now. As the

book has long been out of print I may perhaps be allowed to quote from its pages :

How well I remember the year 1858-9, surely the *annus mirabilis* of old Hinde Street, when Mr. Macdonald, Mr. Llewellyn, Mr. Punshon, and Mr. Frederic Greeves were the circuit ministers—a noble quaternion ! We said so to ourselves at the time, and I say it now with deepened feeling as I look back upon that fourfold ministry which, in its variety and in its oneness, nourished and stimulated my youth. I was little more than a boy then, but I belonged to Hinde Street with all my heart, and Hinde Street belonged to me. Then, as now, I thought the old chapel ugly to a degree that was positively fascinating, but my love for it was never for a moment disturbed thereby. Mine was a spiritual affection that pierced through the outward show of things to their inner beauty and loveliness. For me this grim piece of unimaginative brickwork enshrined sanctities and delights inexpressible. “It nothing common had nor mean” in the round of its ordinances, the very absence of all outward charm only serving to set off other and deeper attractiveness. Perilous, perhaps, was the non-provision for the longings of the eye and of the ear, and the not unlawful susceptibilities of the young, but happily atoned for by the wealth of influences and associations that centred there ; so, at a fastidious age, with the critical faculty well awake, I was more than content with Hinde Street as my spiritual home. On Sunday mornings I would climb the steep staircase, with its friendly rope in place of hand-rail, on my way to the sky-lighted vestry where the class met ; and in the afternoons I dived down the cellar-steps which were the only approach to the schoolroom in which I taught. During the morning service I kept watch over restless Sunday scholars in that wonderful upper gallery to which we of the Sunday school were relegated ; but it was the evening service that brought the crown of all

joys and blessings, when our ministers seemed at their best, and we were most eager and receptive.

For our ministers we had great love and admiration. There was little disposition among us to set one off against another; and, indeed, there was no such inequality in respect of their pulpit powers as to encourage invidious comparisons. No four men who were entirely one in their aims and convictions could differ more widely in style, and in their modes of presenting truth; but the ministry of each seemed to sustain and complete that of the others. Whether it were Mr. Macdonald in the pulpit or Mr. Llewellyn, Mr. Punshon or Mr. Greeves, we looked up and were fed, we came hungry and went away satisfied.

My father was then some fifty-three or four years of age, with the manners and appearance of genial authority, manly alike in thought and mode of utterance. He had lost, I suppose, some of the brightness and fire of his earlier style, but was strong, well balanced, and full of broad sympathies and clear common sense. His noble voice and stately elocution impressed us greatly, and if his didactic strain was occasionally heavy, it was rescued and relieved by the felicity of his illustrations, and the skill with which he introduced a not too frequent anecdote.

Mr. Llewellyn was perhaps more unequal than his colleagues, the difference between his "good times" and his bad ones being more marked. He was always earnest and affectionate, and when his spirit was fairly aglow his impassioned appeals seemed to carry everything before them. If the junior minister of the four, who was still in his probation, had appeared to disadvantage amid such colleagues it would have been but natural, and in no way a proof of inferiority. But in the case of Mr. Frederic Greeves this was not so. It was almost impossible to believe that he was a young preacher. In experience, style, and delivery, he was far beyond his years. He might have been preaching all his life. Young he was in zest and buoyancy of spirit, and perhaps in certain literary tend-

encies and susceptibilities, but mature in all else. He also excelled as a reader and speaker. Our standard of elocution at Hinde Street in those days was a high one. If under Mr. Macdonald, Mr. Punshon, and Mr. Greeves we became somewhat exacting in this matter, who shall blame us?

So far as popularity was concerned, Mr. Punshon greatly distanced all the rest. When it was his turn to preach at Hinde Street we had to be there betimes to gain admission. On a Sunday evening the crowd would begin to gather upon the chapel steps an hour before the time for service. By the time the doors were opened there was a compact mass of people in waiting, and sometimes a painful crush before they streamed freely into the aisles or trooped up the gallery stairs. When the preacher came out of the vestry it was often necessary to clear the pulpit stairs of those who had taken possession of them, in order to allow him to pass. . . . The congregations included all sorts and conditions of men. There were Methodists from all parts of London and from the country, religious people of all denominations, sightseers, novelty hunters, critics, wise men and simpletons of every degree. Sometimes the face of a well-known public character would be seen—actor, statesman, or Church dignitary, and men of the world would smile to meet each other in so unlikely a place as a Methodist chapel. After the text was announced there was a kind of subdued rustling and expectancy, a final adjustment of bodily and mental faculties, and then a silence that could be felt. At intervals of perhaps ten minutes there were breathing spaces when, at the close of a division or period, the spellbound hearers had a brief release, and there was a movement, almost a murmur through the congregation as of pent-up emotion set free. There was a discharge of long-restrained coughs, a general drawing of breath and change of position, until, after a short pause, the tension was renewed as the hearers passed again under the dominion of the preacher and his theme.

My references to Hinde Street would be incomplete if I made no mention of a friendship I enjoyed there, the source of much pleasure and benefit to me at the time, and a happy memory ever since. My friend was Mr. George Corderoy, who was then unmarried, and living with his father, Mr. William Corderoy, in High Street, Marylebone. He was a few years older than I, but the difference of age was not such as to put any barrier between us, or make friendship unequal. I think it was a common appreciation of certain humorous aspects of things and the discovery of a few kindred tastes in books that first drew us together, but these were soon succeeded by a spiritual fellowship closer and deeper than any I had known before. It was not merely that we were members of the same class, and teachers in the same Sunday school—these things would doubtless have carried us a certain length in acquaintance, as they have done with many others; but ours was an affection as of elder and younger brother. He had seniority, not only in years but in development of character; I had it, perhaps, in some respects arising out of my studies and training. Speaking generally, I was but in the making, while he was to a large extent made, and had struck his roots deeper into things than I had. We were soon on terms of open-hearted intimacy. I could tell him of the worst that was in me without hesitation, and of the best without fear of being misunderstood. There was a bit of the rebel in both of us, we being by no means disposed to take all persons and things at their own valuation; but we found that by sharing our rebellious thoughts they were usually

softened, and frequently got rid of. For the steady influence he exercised upon me at certain times that were not without their peril, I have cause to be thankful. More than forty years have passed since he died, at the early age of thirty-five, but the memory of our friendship is still amongst the most cherished of my recollections.

On completing his term of service at Hinde Street, my father was appointed superintendent of the Oldham Street Circuit, Manchester, and removed thither in September, 1859. As I must needs remain in London at the office of Messrs. Harding and Pullein, it was necessary to find a home for me, a matter of some anxiety to my parents. The difficulty was met by the kindness of Mr. Corderoy, the father of my friend, who, now that his son was married, had room for me in his house, and proposed that I should live with him and his sister-in-law, Miss Downing. The offer was thankfully accepted, and I made my home with them very happily until the time came for me to leave London.

My residence in London, however, was not to be of long duration. In April, 1860, I resigned my position with Messrs. Harding and Pullein, with the view of preparing for the ministry. My mind had for some time been moving in this direction, and my convictions were now sufficiently definite for me to act upon them. I ought to say that my father had never sought to influence me in the matter. It sometimes happens that reserve on spiritual things is harder to break through with those who are nearest to us than with any others. When first I began to think of the ministry

as my possible calling in life, I found it easier to speak of it to George Corderoy than to my father, although accustomed to open my mind to him very freely. On his part he was watching the development of my life with affectionate care, and waiting till in his judgment the time had come to give me counsel and guidance. I think he had just a little fear lest I should be led into the ministry by secondary motives such as my surroundings at that time might furnish, by the advice of friends not well qualified to advise, and by my real or fancied aptitude for public speaking. When, however, I wrote to him that my conviction on the subject was now clear and definite, I had his approval and his blessing, and it only remained to consider what steps should be taken to prepare me for the work to which I felt myself called.

In grateful remembrance of one of the best friends of my youth, I should mention a conversation I had had some months previously with Mr. Punshon. He had heard of my ambitious flights as a lecturer at the Chelsea Athenæum and elsewhere, and was interested, and perhaps a little amused. One evening he suddenly asked me, "Well, what have you been lecturing about lately?" I was taken aback by such a question from one who was himself the most famous lecturer of the day, and whom I regarded with admiration too deep for words. He listened kindly to my somewhat shamefaced confessions, and gave me an encouraging word or two. Then, putting his hand on my shoulder, he said, "But when are you going to preach the Gospel? It is better work, you know, than lecturing." I was em-

barrassed, and could only say, "I don't know, I have not thought of that yet." "Well, think of it," he said, "think of it; perhaps God will show you that is your work." This little conversation touched a deeper chord within me than the flattering prophecies of certain well-meaning but not very judicious friends. I took Mr. Punshon's words to heart, and I did as he bade me.

While making arrangements to leave London and rejoin my family in Manchester, my good friend and host, Mr. Corderoy, died very suddenly, having left his home a few hours before in his usual health. He was one of the best of men, honest and upright, generous and kind-hearted, beloved by all who knew him. During the time I was an inmate of his house I saw no flaw in his spirit or temper. He was a Christian indeed. To have lived with him for six months, and with the no less admirable Miss Downing, known among us as "Aunt Fanny," was one of the privileges and blessings of my youth. There is no argument for Christianity so persuasive as the Christian life itself, when lived as they lived it.

CHAPTER V

1860-1866

Removal to Manchester—Owens College—Its Professors and Students
—I Enter the Ministry—My First Circuit, Burslem—My Father
Removes to Wolverhampton—His Failing Health and Retirement—Home Correspondence—Family Marriages.

IT was in the spring of 1860 that I returned to the family life from which I had been for some time separated. It was to be our last season together as a family before the inevitable dispersion began. There was then no sign of the failure of my father's health that was soon to lead to his retirement from active work, and bring his life to what seemed a premature close. His three years in Manchester were the last years of his vigorous working life, to be succeeded by six years of suffering bravely borne before the end came. My mother was still the presiding spirit of the household, ruling it in wise and gentle love, and making the best, as ever, of circumstances that were not without a certain straitness. Hers was a finely disciplined soul, whose control of itself gave her the easy control of her family. I cannot recall an instance of her judgment being contested or in any way resented by any of us. All who knew her felt the charm of her courtesy and kindness, but only her husband and children knew the depth of affection that lay beneath the quiet dignity of her manner, or the play of humour and felicitous speech with which she brightened

our daily life. My eldest sister was finding some vent for her mental energy in writing, and had a story or article occasionally in "Temple Bar." My sister Georgiana's engagement with Edward Burne-Jones was running its happy course, and the time for their marriage was near at hand. The three younger girls were as full of life as young girls can be, and rapidly developing in every respect. So we were a bright and cheerful household, and the only anxiety that lay at the back of our minds, and which our mother carried ever in her heart, concerned our brother in America, from whose letters we gathered, in spite of their reticence on the subject, that he was finding men and things somewhat difficult.

For myself, my chief object in leaving London and coming to Manchester was to resume the studies that had been interrupted while I was at Serle Street, and to carry them in the direction that would best serve to prepare me for the work of my life. But there was another matter to be considered, and, if possible, dealt with at the same time—the question of ways and means. For the past two or three years I had been earning my living, or nearly so, and I knew enough of my father's position to feel that it was desirable I should, if possible, continue to do so. He was the soul of generosity in all his dealings with me, but I could not bear the thought of being altogether dependent upon him. So I looked about me and found a temporary solution of the problem in teaching—not perhaps the wisest employment of my time in the circumstances. For a few months I was assistant master in a private school, teaching

the rudiments after a fashion during the day, and studying in the evening. But the petty round of things in a not very inspiring school first irritated and then wearied me, and I was glad to get out of it. Fortune then put in my way some tutorial work of a different kind, less irksome and more remunerative, and with an amusing side to it that I appreciated. I made the acquaintance of a prosperous manufacturer whose education had been of the slenderest, still comparatively young, and making money fast. Greatly to his credit, be it said, he awoke to a sense of his deficiencies in respect of literature and book knowledge generally, and moved by an enthusiasm which, though it was not very deep, and did not last long, was, I think, sincere, he struck a bargain with me that I should come two or three evenings a week, and help him to an acquaintance with "Milton you know, and Macaulay, and that sort of thing." This suited me precisely, and the odd arrangement was set agoing. On the evening for beginning our studies, when I was about to suggest the line of things we should follow, he said, "I suppose you won't mind me smoking, will you?" adding that he liked a glass of something with his pipe. I made no objection, and under these genial conditions I gave him small doses of the "Paradise Lost," read and expounded Gray's "Elegy," and introduced him to the splendours of Macaulay's "Essays." But I could not hold him for long together with such spells as these, from which he would break away with some humorous Lancashire story, or tell me of something that had happened that day on the Exchange. So our pursuit of the Muses did not carry us very

far, and I pleased him best when I fell in with his suggestions that "perhaps we had done enough for that evening," and we might safely adjourn. Once, indeed, let it be recorded, the fire kindled in my pupil's bosom, or at least a spark flew out, for he exclaimed, "I'll tell you what it is, I'll order all the poets, bound alike!"

This amusing little tutorship served my purposes for a while, but the really important step I took at that time was to enter as a student at Owens College. Nothing, in the circumstances, could have been better for me. There was then little outward promise of the expansion of Owens College into the Victoria University of to-day, but the root of the matter was in it from the first. When I became a student, early in 1860, it had only been in existence nine years. It had but a small staff of professors and not very many students and was lodged, not in buildings erected for academic uses, but in a large, old-fashioned house that had been the residence of Richard Cobden. Its founder, however, had looked forward with a clear vision, counting upon the vitality of the scheme, and its certain development as it came to commend itself to the best mind of a city that was accustomed to do large things in a large way. "He nothing common did or mean" in settling the principles by which it was to be governed, or in making provision for carrying them out. Even on the small scale of its beginning the standard of things was high, as might be seen in the quality of the professorial staff, and the range of study provided for.

The first principal of Owens gave distinction

to his office by his learning and by a weighty and impressive personality. Alexander Scott, at one time a minister of the Church of Scotland and a colleague of Edward Irving, was a scholar of wide and varied knowledge, a philosophic thinker whose genius was akin to that of Coleridge on the one side, and Sir William Hamilton on the other, and a speaker of remarkable force and beauty. All things with him moved ultimately into the sphere of the unseen and the eternal, and though a master of logical forms and processes, he was essentially a mystic, a sane and large-souled mystic. As a teacher he exercised an extraordinary influence over students whose minds were at all attuned to his, an influence best described as spiritual, quickening and calling forth not only thought but aspiration, and opening up paths that it would be good to follow, and goals that might at least be aimed at. Scott has left little or nothing behind him that represents his great qualities. Student of literature as he was, master of it in many ways, he wrote but little, and that in occasional and fragmentary form. The lecturer's desk and the professor's chair were more to him than the writing table. These gave him the conditions that set him at his ease and drew from him his best, and also prescribed the limits to his work and influence. We used to say of him that he was greater than anything he ever did, which somewhat hackneyed saying is, I suppose, true of most men who have done anything at all. But perhaps it is only in a superficial way that we thus distinguish between what a man is and what he does. They are often one and the same thing

looked at from different points of view. What Scott chiefly did in this world was to be the man he was, and what he was may partly be gathered from the fact that he was the loved and honoured friend of Carlyle, of Erskine of Linlathen, and Julius Hare, of Bunsen, and Maurice, and George Macdonald.

Scott resigned the principalship of Owens College in 1857, but continued to act as professor until his death in 1866; and I attended his classes in logic and English language and literature for two years. He showed me some personal kindness, and invited me occasionally to his house.

He was succeeded in the principalship by Dr. Greenwood, professor of classics and Greek Testament. Dr. Greenwood did not appeal to the imagination as Mr. Scott did, overshadowing it, that is, with a certain sense of mystery and awe, but I regarded him, as I think others did, with something approaching to personal affection. He was a man of a gentle and refined spirit, with a slightly hesitating and almost timid manner. This was not, however, associated with any weakness of character or want of authority, as the few who were mistaken enough to presume upon it soon discovered. He was a fine classical scholar and an excellent teacher. I have still a grateful remembrance of his Greek and Latin classes, in which devotion to the minute details of philology and grammar was associated with breadth of comment and illustration, and lightened by mild scholarly jests. In particular I remember how we wrestled with the seventh book of Thucydides, and in spite of lexical

and grammatical pains felt the awe of the great tragedy that closes with the defeat of the Athenians in the Harbour of Syracuse, and the suffering of the prisoners in the quarries. Long years afterwards, as I gazed on the expanse of the great harbour and looked down into the quarries where so many Athenians died, I recalled, not without a certain emotion, the old classroom where I had read of these things, and the gentle enthusiasm of the teacher who had made them live before us.

Of the science side of Owens College I knew little directly, but we were all proud of Professor Roscoe, whose fame even then was national, as it was afterwards international. Professor Sandeman, too, was one of our glories, a mathematician of genius and originality, whose quaint sayings, and the scenes which occasionally took place in his classroom, gave us frequent delight. He is commemorated in his native city of Perth by a bust in the public library. A story is told of him in his later days which I like to believe. It is said that when he was old and feeble two of his former students called to see him. He was evidently touched by their respect and attention, but there was one thing, he said, that troubled him as he thought of the past. "You will remember," said he, "my explaining to you my theory of"—and he mentioned some abstruse law or principle involved in differential calculus—"and," he added, "I have reason to think I was wrong. I have led you wrong, my dear boys, I have led you wrong, and it pains me to think of it." "Well, sir," replied one of them after a moment's pause,

“it may comfort your mind to know that we didn’t understand a word of what you said, so it hasn’t done us any harm.”

The memory of my fellow students at Owens is at least as dear to me as that of the professors. The very scantiness of our number led to close companionship among us. We had a kind of feeling that we were the forefathers of a great race to be, and meanwhile the few of us held together in genial intimacy, and in some instances almost romantic friendship. Speaking of the group on the classical side to which I belonged, Edward John Broadfield was a recognised chief or leader. He was considerably our senior, having been in business for some time before he determined to give himself to a non-commercial life, and to the working out of certain ideas respecting religion, education, and municipal affairs. He entered Owens at about thirty years of age, and found himself a kind of patriarch among those of us who were still on the youthful side of twenty. He took kindly to the position, exercising something of a paternal influence over us, and was at the same time on terms of greater familiarity with the professors than we could aspire to. He took no part in our frolics, but regarded them with good-humoured tolerance. No cleverer than the rest of us, and no better scholar, he had more experience of life, and a weight of character that we all recognised. There was nothing youthful about him except some of his theories, and his liking for young companions. I think his whole after life fulfilled the aims and purposes of his student days to a degree that is quite uncommon. He never married, but devoted himself

for fifty good years to public interests of various kinds, and was one of Manchester's most useful citizens. His early devotion to Owens College was continued to the university which arose out of it, and I believe he was a member of the Senate at the time of his death.

Owens College was, as is well known, absolutely non-sectarian by the articles of its constitution, and in its actual spirit and working, and the success of its non-sectarianism, is worth a good many arguments on the subject. To one matter only will I refer in this connection. Nothing could be cleaner and better than the type of character in the little brotherhood of students to which I have referred. In the conduct, the language, the spirit of my fellow students I can remember nothing that troubled me then, or is unpleasant to think of now. Certainly as regards our denominational standing we were what might be described as a mixed lot. "Old Broadfield," as we affectionately called him, was a Swedenborgian, and for some time a minister in that community. Henry Parry was a Welsh evangelical Churchman, afterwards a clergyman, and Henry Brierley, the youngest and perhaps the best beloved member of our company, an ardent High-Churchman. Frederic Napier and I were Methodists, and Elkanah Armitage was a Congregationalist. Never a ripple of controversy arose among us. We lived and moved on common ground and breathed a common atmosphere, and I think it likely that it was for our lasting good that at that time of our lives we shared a common heritage of teaching and discipline and companionship before settling down to our appointed work

within the bounds, and according to the methods, of our respective churches.

I have lately been looking through the diary which I kept during my last year at Owens College. It is little more than a daily record of college lectures, and of the time given to my studies at home. I find that my principal subjects were Horace, Virgil, the "De Naturâ Deorum" of Cicero, Æschylus, the "Prometheus," and Thucydides; and my time-table shows that I worked on an average seven hours a day. The last entry is: "July 4th, 1862. Distribution of prizes at the college. Obtained first prize for classics, for Greek Testament, and for English literature; £5 for essay on the canon of the New Testament, and certificate for comparative grammar. Went to London in the afternoon." The last sentence, it will be seen, is of some significance.

So ended my college days. They had been too few, and that they were so few has been a matter of regret to me ever since. In some moods I think with bitterness of my imperfect education, grievously interrupted in mid course, and terminated all too soon. I know what may be said about the larger education that begins when school and college days are over, and of the studies carried on by solitary students in hours won from other duties and engagements, and in these respects I have not altogether failed; nevertheless, I count it a loss that has never been made up to me that I passed from under effective and inspiring teaching and academic stimulus when the foundations of classical scholarship had been laid, and I was moving eagerly towards more advanced studies.

In the general programme of my life I think this was a misfortune.

In June, 1860, my sister Georgiana was married to Edward Burne-Jones in the Cathedral of Manchester, where, twenty-seven years before, my father and mother were married, at which time it was known as the Collegiate Church. Henceforth, if there was one less in my father's household, there was one more in his family; and from that time there was a house in London to which we ever turned with delight. It was our link with a world of interests and influences that were to count for much in our lives. From the prize day at Owens College I went direct to London for my examination as a candidate for the ministry. To this I had been moving, consciously and unconsciously, for some time past, though I hoped that it was still a few years in front of me. I wanted time for preparation, time also to make up my mind on certain not unimportant matters. I had had no theological training beyond that involved in the study of the Greek Testament, a study necessarily incomplete. I had preached but a few times—to be exact, I had just six sermons—and I had not even the status of an "accredited local preacher." Nothing, then, was farther away from my thoughts than immediate candidature when I learnt to my surprise that I had been unanimously "recommended" as a candidate for the ministry by the Circuit Quarterly Meeting, the body to whom it belongs to make such recommendations.

My father, who presided over the meeting, was himself taken aback by the proposal. He

knew that I was not expecting it, or at present desirous of it, and said that he could not pledge me to anything, but consented to put it to the vote, with the result I have mentioned. To me the news came as a shock, disturbing certain hopes and plans for the immediate future, and as calling for a decision at once, instead of the decision at leisure on which I was reckoning. I saw at that time, or thought I saw, a possibility of going to Cambridge, and was working hard in view of it. My first impulse was to ask that my name might be withdrawn, but my father urged me to think the matter over carefully and with prayer for God's guidance, suggesting further that the judgment of good Christian men as expressed in this nomination was an element in the case to which some weight should be attached. I followed his counsel, and in the issue ventured to hope that the way in which things had been taken out of my hands, and to a certain extent decided for me, gave some token of the will of God in the matter. Without "seeking after a sign," might it not be that here was an indication of the path I was to take? Before I could decide there was something of a conflict to pass through of which I need now say nothing. But finally the decision was made. I became in due course a candidate, passed the appointed examinations at the hands of the various authorities who guard the approach to the Wesleyan ministry, and was received as a probationer by the conference of 1862.

I took for granted that I should now enter upon a three years' course at one or other of the theological colleges then existing at Richmond

and at Didsbury, and thus secure, if not a university career, at least a reasonable equivalent, but this was not to be. At the close of the Conference which was held in Camborne, I received a note from the Rev. J. P. Dunn, a colleague of my father's: "You are appointed to a circuit. You are down for Burslem. I suppose to re-establish orthodoxy." The latter words had a local reference which need not now be explained. Some three weeks later I had taken up my residence in Burslem.

Thus did I make my entrance on the ministry in which my life has been spent, and I did so sincerely desirous to serve and please God in the work to which He had called me, and not so much troubled as perhaps I ought to have been about my preparedness or unpreparedness for the duties that lay before me. Looking back upon it all from a distance of more than fifty years I feel bound to express my judgment that the appointment of one so young and slenderly equipped to the work that awaited me in Burslem was a perilous experiment, perilous alike to myself and to the interests committed to my care. I was not yet twenty-one, and my experience of life was small. Moreover, I had very little acquaintance with the practical working of Methodism which I must now help to administer and maintain. In a word, I was untrained for my profession in any definite or specific sense when I began to exercise it. I know that in the larger sense every man must educate himself, whatever his calling may be; none the less every calling has requirements of its own which determine the kind of preparation it calls for, and

not least that of the Ministry. The recognition of this is now so well established in the Methodist Church that such an experience as mine could hardly occur to-day. For the last word on the subject I may quote an old friend, a well-known minister, who once said to me, "When you entered the Ministry there were two classes of men who were sent into active work without going to college—those whose previous educational advantages seemed to make it unnecessary, and those who were so hopelessly dull that no amount of college would make any difference. And," he added, "I have never been able to make up my mind to which class you belonged"! Let us leave it at that.

The three years I spent in Burslem I have always regarded as my apprenticeship to the Ministry. The conditions of life and work there were not too easy, nor yet too hard. I had now to regulate my own studies as best I could, and, in addition, to acquire the knowledge, the experience, and, above all, the sympathies that go to make a preacher and a pastor. The few sermons I had hitherto preached were little more than literary exercises on religious themes, not greatly differing in construction and style from my lectures and college essays. They were sincere and well-meaning, but bookish in their allusions and rhetorical in form. But I soon felt that something different was needed if I was to come into effective touch with my hearers. It was not that I must preach down to them, exercising a kind of intellectual condescension. The good people who constituted the solid, central element in my congregations were quite able to appreciate better preaching than

any I was likely to give them ; but they did not care for literary ingenuities, for disquisitions on small points, for appeals to poets, critics, and philosophers, or, generally, for felicities of phrase, and other pleasant things of the kind which I was perhaps disposed to value above their worth. They did not tell me of their likings and dislikings in these matters, but as I came to know them I felt instinctively that other modes of addressing them were called for ; that it was one thing to please an audience, and another thing to feed a flock and build up a church. I found that if I was to do this I must get to know and understand the people. I could not acquire this knowledge in my study, or by the help of books. I must go among them. It was the only way. There was no difficulty about that so far as the comfortable middle-class families were concerned. They were hospitable and friendly, always glad to see the minister in their house and at their table. But pastoral duty required more than this. The great bulk of the population consisted of the working-classes—potters, colliers, ironworkers, and others engaged in allied trades and industries. Beneath these again was that lowest class which lies at the bottom of the social structure—the unemployable, the lapsed classes, the residuum which provides the community with its most difficult problems. Perhaps I am not as well fitted by temperament as some of my brethren to gain easy access to working people, but I did my best to understand their modes of life and ways of thinking. I went into their homes, and to their workshops and other places of labour, I visited their sick, and did what I could to help

them in their times of trouble. In houses where it was convenient and agreeable that I should do so, I would take tea, often an occasion of royal hospitality on their part. I accompanied trusted collier friends in underground expeditions to the face of the coal, and tried my hand at the potter's wheel, and my foot at the treadle. I met classes, held prayer-meetings, attended tea-meetings, and addressed school-children. These things I did in the hope of doing some good to my people, and for my own sake that I might lessen the distance between them and me, and by acquaintance with their real life and character acquire something like the pastoral heart as I conceived it. And in this I was sustained both by a sense of duty and by my love of the picturesque in human nature. Of the latter there was abundance in almost all the forms it can assume. The annals of a parish, or the experience of a minister in a manufacturing town, will furnish all we ought to ask of the drama of human life—comedy in many varied forms, and tragedy in some of its most heart-moving developments. Shakespeare, Balzac, and Dickens have but writ large what may be seen on smaller scale in the heroisms and meannesses of daily life, the noble and the ignoble joys and sorrows, and the rise and fall of character for ever going on around us. The study of these things was a great part of an apprenticeship in which I had much to learn, and some things to unlearn; and my sense of the mystery and pathos of life, and my belief that only He who made us and redeemed us can solve its problems and heal its diseases, were deepened and strengthened.

At the same time that I entered upon my work at Burslem my father removed to Wolverhampton, his last appointment as it proved. He was very kindly received, and the family letters of that period show a hearty appreciation of the conditions of the life there. My mother was touched by the esteem in which her husband was held, and by the arrangements that were made for his comfort and hers, and my sisters found some congenial society. Much of their heart was always with their friends in London, and the Burne-Jones home, in particular, was a centre not only of their affection, but of interests of a fascinating kind, and a visit there was a never-failing source of pleasure. They made friends, however, in Wolverhampton I think beyond what they had done in Manchester, companionable friends who shared, or at least sympathised with, their intellectual aims and ideals. Among these was Mr. Henry Fowler, then a young man already distinguished in local affairs, and carrying the promise of the distinction in a wider sphere which he attained as Sir Henry Fowler, and as Viscount Wolverhampton. He was, as I remember him, keen and eager in conversation, brusque at times, argumentative, not to say combative, hearty in his likes and dislikes, and free in his expression of the same, a strong, earnest, high-minded man, with more kindness, more tenderness of heart, than his somewhat masterful manner would suggest. My sisters and he were soon on excellent terms, and discussed men, books, and things in general to their satisfaction, if not always to their agreement in opinion. It is pleasant to know that the friendships then formed were life-long, and

were shared by his admirable and greatly loved wife.

The one cloud that was gathering over the household was caused by my father's steadily declining health. It became evident to himself and to us all that he must retire from active work, and reconcile himself to the life of an invalid. This he accordingly did at the end of his first year in Wolverhampton, taking a house there in which he remained for two or three years, when he removed to Bewdley, the quiet little country town in which he died in November, 1868. When his retirement became necessary he was at his best, intellectually and spiritually. The vigour of his understanding was what it had been for years, and his love of reading and his interest in life were perhaps stronger than ever; but with suffering there came a gentleness of spirit, a calm ripeness of Christian character that was very touching, and remains among my most sacredly cherished memories. How my mother tended him through these closing years, with what devotion, with what wisdom and skill, and loving insight into his thoughts and feelings, can never be told, but while the last of her children survives it will not be forgotten. There were times during the long illness when the pressure on his spine seemed lightened and he had freer use of his limbs. It was then his happiness, and the delight of the people, to be taken to the chapel and preach sitting in an arm-chair within the communion rails. He had command of himself, of his feelings and of his voice, and it is said by those who heard him that he never preached with more heart-moving power.

Spiritual strength seemed to be made perfect in bodily weakness, and some were awed, and many wept, as they looked at him and listened.

As Wolverhampton is but a short journey from Burslem I was able to run over there very frequently, and in the intervals of my visits I was kept in close touch with my family by our correspondence. Moreover, from time to time my sisters came to stay with me in my Burslem lodgings.

A few extracts from my mother's letters will show something of the family life at that time:

October 7th, 1862.

On Friday we all went as Mr. Hartley's guests to spend the day at Tong Castle, and a most delightful day we had. The weather was as beautiful as heart could wish, and the place and the scenery about it are well worth going a long way to see. We wandered about the grounds till dinner time, some of the young people amusing themselves by rowing on the pools. One old lady spent the day in fishing, and all, I think, must have enjoyed the day. Nothing could exceed the kindness of our hosts, and Mrs. Hartley is every way worthy to preside in hall or castle. I am very much pleased with the people here, both in the higher and the middle class.

I am glad to hear of your comfort, my dear boy, and it is my daily prayer that you may be blessing and blessed in your new sphere.

February 24th, 1863.

I scarcely feel able to give expression to all the good wishes that I cherish in my heart for you on your birthday. I have been going back in memory to the days of infancy and childhood, and reviewing some of the perils which assailed your young life, and the result is a con-

viction that a life so wonderfully preserved was surely spared for high and holy purposes. May God bless you, my dear son, and accomplish in you and by you all that a good man can be and do. I wish you very many and very happy returns of the day, and that you may live to be a venerable patriarch, dwelling among your own people.

My correspondence with my father at this time was a continual stimulus and blessing to me. As my own life opened out, I was increasingly drawn to seek his counsel and sympathy in a line of things he understood so well ; and as his strength and activity diminished, his interest in the son who was putting on his armour seemed to grow continually more deep and tender. I carefully preserved his letters, and, as I found after his death, he preserved mine. The correspondence lies before me as I write, and I quote from it.

From Burslem I wrote to my father,

October, 1862.

Pulpit preparation is still the work which chiefly occupies my time for study. For my week-night services I content myself with less preparation, and have once or twice preached without notes of any kind. As regards reading, I think, considering my engagements, I have so far done pretty well. I have read Alexander's "Connexion of the Old and New Testaments," Trench's "Hulsean Lectures" for 1845-6, Kingsley's "Village Sermons," Horne's "Introduction," and some odds and ends to meet exigencies. I read the Greek Testament carefully each day. I have also read "Paradise Lost," of which I only knew the first three books previously, with Addison's Critical Essays upon it, *pari passu*, Carlyle's Lives of Schiller and of Sterling, and portions of Milner's "Church History," of Chaucer, and De Quincey.

I take great interest in Longport and its people, and shall do all in my power to work it well. The prayer meetings seem likely to be useful, and the week-night congregations are much increased. Preaching in a cottage or a kitchen is capital discipline both for one's heart and powers of speaking, and I really enjoy it. We seem to realise very vividly our common interest in religion, and with no pulpit or pews we seem to get somehow near to each other in heart, the domestic scenery and associations rather adding to than diminishing the sacredness of the worship in which we join.

It is something of a coincidence that we should both have been reading Carlyle's "Sterling" at the same time. I agree with you to a "t" in the reflections you make. It is a painful book to me. With every disposition to think well of Carlyle, he seems to me much of a pagan. He is not a man without religion, but his religion is perfectly independent of Scripture. I don't want him to say "Shibboleth" with me, or to respond to the passwords I may use, but when he throws the Old Testament aside as "Hebrew old clothes," and ignores the New Testament, I think him nothing of a Christian and not much of a philosopher. Doubtless, he is a very giant, a blind Samson who gropes by and passes over truth in a way that is truly melancholy.

Another letter from my father :

WOLVERHAMPTON.

November, 1863.

I think of you frequently and anxiously as to the future. My dear father would often say to me when about your age and ministerial standing, "You are on the wheel, either to be made or marred." Your knowledge of the potter's art will show you how forcible the illustration is. I am much concerned about the progress of your educa-

Correspondence with My Father III

tion, which, in the large sense, has only just begun. The *minutiae* of scholarship slip away rapidly and remorselessly unless carefully watched. You have an excellent foundation laid, and that is about all that can be said for it. What kind of superstructure is there to be?

Be a theologian; read theology that you may have ample and varied staple for your sermons. As to popularity, let that take its course, only be sure not to aim at it or preach for it. It is creditable to the piety of our people as a whole that plain, faithful Gospel preaching is highly appreciated. It is indeed a glorious calling to testify the gospel of the grace of God. Paul says to Timothy, "Give thyself wholly to it"; more literally, "Be all in it." The more fully you throw your whole soul into the work of the Ministry, the more happy and useful you will be.

The scene to which you refer must have been a most distressing and affecting one. Medical students not merely attend lectures on the theory of medicine and disease, but *clinical* lectures also, by the bedside of the patient. Such home missionary work as that of your last Sabbath afternoon is a true part of a pastor's work, and lessons are taught in such a scene that can be learned nowhere else. I got to chapel on Sunday morning with the help of your mother's arm. It was seven Sundays since I had been in the House of God, and I was refreshed and comforted.

To my father I wrote in July, 1864:

I have finished Wardlaw's "Ethics," having made a written analysis of every chapter, and notes on various collateral subjects which will be of use to me. I have also read with deep interest Isaac Taylor's "Physical Theory of Another Life." I do not know if you are acquainted with it; if so, you will understand the pleasure it has afforded me. I feel increasingly desirous to read mental and moral philosophy. Theology and philosophy are so

intimately connected that if the study of human thought be not added to that of divine truth, a student cannot, it seems to me, do justice to the latter. I am half-way through the "Second Philippic" already, and am going through Lactantius' "De Vero Cultu," and find it easy and pleasant. His Latin is as good as that of any of the Fathers—quite good enough for me, I assure you! And the treatise is interesting as fourth-century divinity written by a converted pagan rhetorician.

My father wrote to me in October, 1864:

I am suffering more pain at times than at any former period. I have been thinking this afternoon of your text, and part of it—"the God of all consolation"—suggested sweet thoughts to my mind. You and I are great admirers of Whately. I met to-day with his last recorded words on his death-bed, and was delighted, and I trust profited, by them. "It is a great mercy," said a friend to him, "that though your body is weak, your intellect is vigorous still." "Talk to me no more of intellect," he replied; "there is nothing now for me but Christ!" And so says your old and afflicted father, who in life and death loves and blesses you.

Meantime, the lighter aspects of things in the family life had report and comment in letters from my sisters. In giving a few extracts from them I need not name the separate writers, or give precise dates.

WOLVERHAMPTON.

I dined with papa and mamma at Mr. Henry Fowler's on Tuesday. I don't think dinners are meant for any but middle-aged and elderly people, who care about what are called "the pleasures of the table." It was a kind of inaugural dinner, and we met the Colleagues. Alice stayed

at home to entertain Louisa. She has brought back her lovely voice intact, and we look forward to a good deal of music till her departure.

Anne is going to leave us in about three weeks. I will tell you some sweet stories of her when I see you. She has given much freedom to her tongue and temper, and we begin to fancy she is a little cracked. I heard Mr. — preach a fortnight ago, a most wearisome sermon of an hour and twenty minutes in length. I must confess I felt irritated when, after preaching for a good hour, he began to describe some scenery he greatly admired. Everyone looked most weary, and many crept out.

. . . You will be glad to hear that our wild, tremendous Anne has actually gone, and her place is supplied by a harmless and (hitherto) inoffensive Mary. She left in a perfect whirlwind and dust of lies, which made us so dizzy that we have no idea where she is gone.

Have you your piano still? I know I am asking you about five hundred questions, but I want them all answered, so your best and easiest plan will be to lay my two letters before you and keep a sharp look-out for the notes of interrogation. I don't know whether they had begun to build the club next door when you were last here. We are in the midst of noise—not to say row—all day, and from seven in the evening the music of the circus recently erected on the waste ground opposite does not cease till nearly eleven. This is wearisome to a degree, for now we know dreadful tunes off by heart. We can hear the people laugh, and when we are sitting quite still in our innocent parlour the voice of the clown is audible.

I was pleased with what you said to papa about Mr. G. I have heard him speak once. He stamped, roved about, roared, gesticulated, and sweated to a great extent over a very commonplace speech he was making. We have learnt one or two things to sing since you were here, and I think you will like them. They are Old French.

I wish you, dear Fred, fifty happy returns of your birthday, and as many more as you feel equal to after that. I can hardly realise what a grown-up family we now are, but as we all retain the essence and fire of youth, a few odd years more or less don't matter. Every year I am increasingly thankful that I have the honour and happiness to be a Macdonald, as I find elements and combinations among my brothers and sisters which I fail to meet with elsewhere. Let us stick together, whatever betide. We girls have just had a little jaunt to Birmingham, to pay a long promised visit. We called on the ——. They are repulsively numerous, being thirteen in number, and legion their name, so that their house is, as one might say, a hutch, or a warren. How do you like you and me being godfather and godmother to Rudyard Kipling? How shall we teach him his little catechism at this distance?

While these letters were running their course, events of great importance to some of us personally, and to the family as a whole, were taking place. It was scarcely to be expected that girls so bright and attractive as my sisters were would be left in undisturbed maiden liberty. The next to leave the maiden sisterhood was my eldest sister Alice. Soon after taking up my residence in Burslem I had made the acquaintance, soon ripening into friendship, of John Lockwood Kipling. He was spending a few months in the Potteries, designing patterns and shapes for manufacturers, and generally increasing his mastery of plastic art. He brought intellectual and artistic qualities into our midst as from another and different realm. Not only was he skilful and experienced in arts and crafts and well versed in literature, but his general know-

ledge was exceedingly wide, and behind it all was a mind of distinct originality, interested in almost everything, at once sympathetic and critical, given to large views of things yet fastening with curious accuracy upon details and particulars. In addition, he was gentle and kindly in spirit, and companionship with him was a continual refreshing. He was a man of another order altogether from those around me, and brought into my life an element that they could not supply. When, soon afterwards, my sister came to pay me a visit I was proud to introduce her to my friend, who soon became her friend also. Mentally they had much in common, though with certain obvious differences of temperament. She was keen, quick, and versatile beyond anyone I have known, saw things at a glance, and dispatched them in a word. His mind moved more slowly, and was patient and meditative to a degree that for her was impossible. It was a case of the masculine and the feminine mind each in high typical development, and the result, as so often in such cases, was mutual understanding and a kinship of thought and feeling that soon ripened into something more. It was after a day that a number of us spent together at Rudyard Lake, a favourite place of resort, that they became engaged. They were married in March, 1865, and soon afterwards left England for Bombay.

If circumstances connected with my life thus led to the marriage of one sister, the next engagement in our family was a consequence, though more remotely, of a friendship of my brother's. In June, 1860, my sister Georgiana was married

to Edward Burne-Jones, first introduced to her and to us all by my brother Harry as his school-fellow; and some years later, while visiting at their house, my sister Agnes met with Mr. Edward Poynter, an artist friend of Burne-Jones's. Of Mr. Poynter, now Sir Edward Poynter, Bart., President of the Royal Academy, and bearer of many honours, I need say no more, as he is, happily, still living, one of the best-known men in the world of art and of public life.* His engagement with my sister Agnes, a beautiful and charming girl, soon followed their first acquaintance. The next of my father's daughters to follow in this succession was my sister Louisa, who became engaged to Mr. Alfred Baldwin, a man of fine character, and of qualities that gave him in after years distinction and success in Parliament and in the higher walks of business. Agreement in the convictions and sentiments that govern life, with common ideals and similar tastes, were theirs from the first, the prelude to a married life without cloud or shadow to which no good thing seemed wanting.

While things were thus moving happily at home, I became engaged to Mary, the youngest daughter of Mr. Benjamin Cork, of Burslem, a manufacturer well known and much esteemed in his native town. She soon afterwards became my wife, and was for forty-three years my faithful and loving companion. On August 9th, 1866, my sisters Agnes and Louisa were married at the parish church of Wolverhampton, the former to

* Sir Edward Poynter died on the 26th of July, 1919, while this volume was in the press. He was buried in St. Paul's Cathedral four days later.

Edward Poynter, the latter to Alfred Baldwin. My father's state of health did not allow him to be present, and I took his place in the ceremony. Two days later I was married to Mary Cork in the Wesleyan Chapel, Burslem, my friend and colleague, the Rev. Thomas Akroyd, officiating. I was at the time stationed in Liverpool, the youngest of the four ministers of the Stanhope Street Circuit

CHAPTER VI

1866-1868

Liverpool—New Beginnings—Studies and Mental Life.

WITHIN the compass of every life there are usually many beginnings, some of greater, some of less importance, but each having its significance in the relation to the whole. I had now come to one of these. Previously, my ordination and marriage had together constituted a goal beyond which I hardly cared to look ; but now that I had reached it, I found it was not so much a goal as a starting-place, and all that had preceded was little more than preparation and rehearsal. It was as though I saw for the first time the real dimensions and meaning of things, the breadth, and beauty, and mystery of life. Before me lay a road that I must travel to other goals as yet unknown, to spheres of service in which my own destiny was to be determined, and in which I was to have a share in determining the destiny of others. It was not exactly a spiritual crisis at which I had arrived, but rather an enlargement of vision and a quickening of emotion, and with these was an immense influx of hopefulness. All things seemed possible. It was the dawn,

And bliss was it in that dawn to be alive.

Moreover, the conditions of my life at the time were congenial, and altogether favourable to the new impulses that were making themselves felt.

My health and spirits were of the best. My mind was all alive, very impressible and responsive, finding pleasure in its every exercise. Books were an unfailing source of inspiration, both intellectual and spiritual, besides giving me all the recreation that I wanted. In friends I was rich indeed, and much of my happiness, then as always, came to me through them. As for disagreeable people and unpleasant incidents—and both had to be reckoned with—the sense of humour inwoven with my mental structure disposed me for the most part to put a genial interpretation upon them ; and if it did not quite enable me to extract sunbeams from cucumbers, it took the sting out of many of the annoyances from which no one's course of life is free.

I was still knit by the strongest ties to the home of my parents, and to those other homes that had sprung from it, and through the latter I kept in some kind of touch with a world of literature and art far removed from that in which my ordinary duties lay. This not only added to my enjoyment of life, but, I think, to my better understanding of it ; for few mistakes are commoner than that of regarding one's own familiar environment as a nearer approach to the typical and the universal than it really is. And to this particular error our imperfect sympathies and erroneous judgments of other people are largely due. We really do not know one another's life, the setting in which it is placed, and the interests that occupy it, and it is very easy to take for granted that in so far as it is different from our own it differs for the worse. This, I am persuaded, is one of the permanent

sources of misunderstanding between the rich and the poor, between those to whom art and literature mean a great deal, and those to whom they mean little or nothing. This belief has been strengthened in me by my many opportunities of passing from one social circle to another very unlike it. And the moral of it all is, that if we knew one another better we should love each other more, or should at least find cause to "gently scan our brother man," and judge him with sympathy and consideration even when he least resembles ourselves. Be this as it may, it was among my chief pleasures during the years of which I write to shut down my work, to leave my good people, and sun myself for a few days in the company of Burne-Jones and Poynter and my sisters, to look at pictures still on the easel, to listen to studio talk and jest, to the wildest of tales and the gravest of discussions concerning things old and new, rounded off with English ballads and early French and Italian music. At such times I would meet Rossetti again, and feel once more the charm that had fascinated me in my boyhood; or Morris would pass with little warning from grave silence into a hurricane of real or humorous rage and tempestuous denunciation; and Swinburne would literally hop about the room with excitement as he poured forth ancient or modern verse from a memory that seemed to hold all that ever was written. It was good to have exchanged for a while the homely duties of my circuit for this, and good also to go back to them again. I used to wish sometimes that the two worlds did not lie so far apart, and that there was some little interchange between

them of the best that each had. And the wish may be extended to other circles in our national life which never intersect, and at the most touch only at a point in their circumference.

I now had for the first time a home of my own, and this in itself seemed to freshen the very springs of life. For four years I had lived in lodgings, with the usual experience of precarious comfort and recurring annoyances, but on my marriage a house was provided for me, sufficiently furnished and equipped, and to this, in August, 1866, I took my wife, whose loving companionship and sweet household wisdom filled it with light, and brought into my life a peace, reverently be it said, passing understanding. How well I remember our beginnings of housekeeping with its amusing misadventures, the pleasure we found in our domestic arrangements, our modest marketings and frugal living, by which a stipend of £100 a year was made to cover all our expenditure, and put a brave show on things. The memory of such bright days may well be cherished, as I cherish it now after more than fifty years have passed.

One other blessing completed the happiness of that time. I was free from misgivings with respect to my calling. Perhaps the theological atmosphere was then less troubled than it has since been, and there were fewer influences to unsettle a young minister's faith than later years have brought; or it may be there was something in my early training, or in my own cast of mind, that prevented my being greatly affected by them. In any case, I did not suffer from "honest doubt." I heartily believed then, as I do now, in the historic

creed of Christendom, and in the Incarnate Son of God as its living and life-giving centre, and it was without mental reserve, or "private interpretation" of the generally received Gospel that I gave myself to the work for which I had been set apart. I was quite aware that I was living in a different age from that in which Methodism had its rise, and that in modes of thought and ways of expressing it I was of the nineteenth century and not of the eighteenth; but I had not broken with the tradition received through my father and grandfather, and was well content to be a Methodist preacher. I was under no illusion as to the position of Methodism and its ministers in the social life of the country, and in its relations to more ancient and historic religious institutions; so that such ambitions as I cherished lay within modest, or if the term be preferred, narrow bounds, but I was satisfied that within the compass of the Church to which I belonged there was scope enough for the best that I could do and be.

As I have said, I seemed to begin life afresh after my ordination and marriage, and this extended to my studies. Hitherto I had been obliged to follow a prescribed course of reading, though but a slender one, and to undergo examination year by year. But now I was no longer a probationer, and ceased to be an examinable being, an appreciable relief, for, of examinations, as of all other earthly delights, "cometh satiety at last"; but it brought with it more of responsibility than I perhaps realised. I was full of enthusiasm, but the assistance of a competent guide just then would have been invaluable. It would have saved me from ill-arranged

methods of work, and given definiteness and compactness to efforts that were spread over too wide an area, and sometimes mistook the proportions and relative value of things. On the other hand, I found, as many another solitary student has found, great happiness in the freedom with which I worked, following the gleam in this direction and in that, sometimes forsaking highways for by-paths, and not always finding my way back again; sometimes coming upon unexpected treasure, and at others, I fear, missing the good that I should not have missed if I had had a guide. On the whole, it is better to sail under a good captain, or to have a pilot on board; but the joys of voyaging alone are not small, and will by some be willingly accepted, the risks notwithstanding.

Though my natural bent was to the classics, I knew that classical scholarship in any serious sense of the term was now out of the question, but that was no reason why I should drop such pleasant acquaintance as I had with Horace and Virgil, and Cicero and Tacitus and Terence. Perhaps I was better fitted to enjoy them as literature than when my attention was mainly directed to niceties of grammar and philology. With no fear of examination before me, I might now read them for their own sake as poets and thinkers and masters of style. This, at least, was my hope, a hope in some measure realised. From that time to this I have held on to Latin literature. I still love to visit its spacious realm, not only those central provinces to which one's feet first turn, but the less frequented regions of its post-classical and Christian development. An academically

trained scholar may refuse to follow the stream of Latin literature beyond the age of Tacitus and the younger Pliny ; but the less scrupulous general reader will have his reward in pushing on till he comes to Ausonius, and Claudian, to Prudentius, and Augustine, and that second life of the Latin language which it received under the influence and for the service of Christianity. It was only by degrees that I came to appreciate the range and potency of Latin during the centuries that followed the close of the great classic period, but when once realised, the field of my studies and recreations was greatly enlarged, and I have never ceased to wander therein as time and disposition have served.

My Greek, I was obliged to acknowledge, was by this time somewhat out of repair. Classical Greek, save in the case of professional scholars, must, I think, be classed among perishable goods—vanishing possessions whose tendency is ever to slip away unless held fast by close and constant attention, while Latin, less evanescent and volatile, is easier to retain when school and college days are over. De Quincey has some remarks on this subject, on which I cannot just now lay my hand. He prided himself, as is well known, on his Greek, but suggests that there is something unkind, not to say indelicate in asking any man who is not a scholar by profession to translate from Greek at sight, and my experience of better Greek scholars than myself has shown me that there is ground for the friendly hint. So I continued to read a little Greek for conscience' sake, and a good deal of Latin for the pleasure of it. My theological

studies during the early years of my ministry moved round the text of the Greek Testament, starting from it and returning to it. Alford's "Commentary" was then at the height of its reputation and influence, and nothing that has since appeared should lessen our sense of the immense service it rendered to the study of the Greek Testament. There is sometimes a little forgetfulness and ingratitude in these matters, but few deserve them less than Alford, whose "work forms an epoch in biblical studies in England; and though separate portions of the Greek Testament have since been more fully dealt with by others, it is as yet unapproached as a whole." To me it was invaluable. From Alford, and Conybeare and Howson, I passed on to Ellicott, Lightfoot and Westcott, and to the great series of foreign—chiefly German—commentaries issued from Edinburgh, and among these I was chiefly indebted to the writings of Stier, and Olshausen, and Godet. I cheerfully endured the prolixity I had to encounter, the too copious references to authorities with whom they agreed or disagreed, and the too frequent pursuit of grammatical subtleties till they became invisible, and I found it worth my while to do so. Of the theologians and philosophical writers who most impressed me when my mind was receiving many a lasting impress, the first place must be assigned to Butler—our one and only Butler. I owe more to him than to any other, and cannot but reckon him as one who was "not for an age, but for all time." I know what may be said of the changed conditions of thought since his day, and of the need for Christian apologetic

of another kind than his ; but the qualities of his mind, and the scale on which he possessed them, his grasp of the principles on which right reasoning on such subjects as he discussed must ever depend, the combination in him of intellectual strength and humility, his profound regard for facts as compared with theories and speculations, his consistent refusal to strain his argument or ignore a difficulty—these and other characteristics of his mind and method give imperishable value to his writings, and constitute them an armoury and an equipment that can never be obsolete.

When I first met with Mozley's Bampton Lecture on "Miracles," I felt that I had found in him a thinker much akin to Butler in certain fundamental respects, an impression subsequently confirmed by his University Sermons and "Essay on Development." Him also I must place high among my teachers. One more name must be mentioned, or I should be ungrateful indeed. Julius Hare's "Victory of Faith," and "Mission of the Comforter," the former especially, were epoch-making books to me. In their subjects, and in the treatment of them, they were not so far removed from my ordinary studies and pulpit preparations as the works above referred to. They enlarged and illumined for me some familiar truths, setting them in a new perspective, and giving them a fullness of meaning not felt before. I do not now find myself returning to Hare's writings as I do to those of Butler and of Mozley, but in their time and place they were of great service to me. A tribute that I paid to the author when my enthusiasm for his works was at its height

has permanent record in my family history. I had then an infant son waiting for a name, and I had him christened Julius, not in honour of the Roman Emperor, as is sometimes suggested, but of the English divine. To one scheme of theological reading which proved a failure I must refer before leaving the subject. During the 'sixties an enterprising firm of publishers sought to give a new lease of life to the Puritan divines by issuing a long series of them in solid octavo volumes at a moderate price. I had been familiar from my boyhood with the names of Sibbes and Charnock, of Manton, and Bates, and Caryl, and many another painful preacher, and though unacquainted with their writings had a prepossession of respect in their favour. So I became a subscriber to the series, and for some years a steady stream of Puritan theology flowed into my study, threatening to fill its every corner and crevice. For a while I maintained the unequal contest. I tried hard to adjust my mind to the methods and style of seventeenth-century divinity, and blamed myself for the weariness caused by unconscionable length and copiousness, and scrupulous detail pursued to the vanishing point. But it was of no use; and remembering that life is short, and should not be spent in attempting the impossible, I bade these heavy fathers respectful adieu, acknowledging to them, and to all whom it might concern, that my failure to profit by them was my fault or misfortune and not theirs.

But if my theological equipment was somewhat scanty, it was less so in respect of English literature. Here I had needed no spur, and had

scarcely felt the want of help or guidance from others. The love of books was an early passion with me, springing into existence in my childhood as though the seeds of it were implanted at my birth. And happily for me the conditions of my life were favourable to its development. I never wanted for books. They were a goodly part of "the heaven that lay about me in my infancy." In my schooldays boyish sports did not at all disturb the supremacy of their hold upon me; and as I grew to manhood my love for them sobered and settled down into a devotion that has since known no slackening. By the time I was ten years old I had not only read the "Pilgrim's Progress," and "Robinson Crusoe," but "Don Quixote," and "Gulliver's Travels," and the "Vicar of Wakefield," and the "Arabian Nights," and the "Lady of the Lake," and legends of Greece and Rome, and early English and Scottish ballads; and soon afterwards came the Waverley Novels, and Dickens, and Charlotte Brontë, and Macaulay, and from across the Atlantic, Longfellow, and Hawthorne, and Edgar Allan Poe. I was far from having any aim or plan in my reading—the time for that was not yet come. Instinct was at work, leading me to the objects of my desire. Every book on which I could lay my hands was a possible source of pleasure, and if I found it readable I read it. The old Methodist magazines were not too pious for me, nor "Vanity Fair" too worldly, nor Quarles' "Emblems" too quaint, nor Whewell's "Plurality of Worlds" too scientific. Before I was fifteen I had read Malory's "Morte d'Arthur," and Spenser's "Faerie Queene," had begun to read Shakespeare

and Milton, and was enthusiastic in my love of Tennyson.

During my ministerial probation I continued to browse freely on English literature. I find in my book-lists of 1862-66 the names of more than 200 different works, "grave and gay, lively and severe." How vividly does it all come back to me—my little study-sitting-dining-room, with its bookshelves on either side of the fireplace; the bachelor tea or supper-table; the evening meal prolonged, not by any elaborateness or luxury that characterised it, but by the book which was its invariable accompaniment; the tray pushed aside and the chair wheeled round to the fire; my first timid transactions with tobacco, a herb whose associations with literature are ancient and well-established, and then—

Away! away! for I will fly to thee,
Not charioted by Bacchus and his pards,
But on the viewless wings of poesy.

There was little danger of my being whirled into realms of fantasy and remaining there, for my life was a busy and practical one, and my social environment genial and enjoyable; but my books gave me glorious excursions and the best of company, and lifted me to those large regions of delight whence all lands are visible, and where all human life moves in ceaseless presentment.

After my ordination, as I have said, I took to my studies afresh, with renewed zeal and larger aims than before. My general acquaintance with English literature was, considering my age and many occupations, somewhat advanced, but I

felt that it needed knitting together and systematising. Literature has its provinces and divisions, and its larger and smaller fields, its varieties of soil and climate, like the earth which is described and mapped out by geographers. It has also its dynasties and successions, its revolutions, advancements, and fallings back, akin to those which the historian records. I saw therefore that it was not enough to read this book or that for the immediate pleasure of doing so. I must at the same time give closer study to the great authors, and get, if possible, a grasp of the relation between our literature as a whole and its various parts, of the movements and tendencies of mind to which it owed at once its variety and its unity. Study was not too severe a word to describe the way in which I must approach the master minds of English literature, and indeed many of the lesser ones. None of them is unrelated to the rest, to those who have preceded, and to those who come after. They all spring from the common life of the race to which they belong, and return to it in influences often helpful and far-reaching. They contribute, some in larger some in smaller degree, to the thought, the sentiment, the imagination of their own and after generations, and these things are for the student to trace and to estimate. The product of a single mind like that of Shakespeare, Milton, or Wordsworth may permanently claim and reward the study of the best minds among us, and even then the matter is not done with. They have "a life beyond a life" in the thoughts of others whom they give stimulus and direction. The first harvests of their genius furnished seed

whence in turn other harvests have sprung. If, for example, we were to take out of the literature of the last hundred years all that it owes to Wordsworth; and from that of the last two hundred years what it owes to Milton; and from that of the last three hundred years all that it owes to Shakespeare, the literature of each of those periods would be other than what it is, and altered beyond all recognition.

Thoughts of this kind gave a more serious turn to my treatment of our great authors. I still have by me a collection of notes on Milton that I made between 1867 and 1870. They contain nothing very original or striking, but they bear witness to the sincerity and earnestness with which I studied him. Verbal criticism is represented by notes on words and modes of expression employed by the poet. Passages from other poets, in which Milton's thought or language find an echo or an anticipation, are quoted for the sake of comparison or contrast, as the case may be. For these I have drawn upon Virgil, Piers Plowman's "Vision," and Spenser's "Faerie Queene," upon Shakespeare, Bishop Ken, and Tennyson. Critical and illustrative passages from Addison and Johnson, from Coleridge, and De Quincey, and Julius Hare are also to be found. I made similar notes on Chaucer, Spenser, and Shakespeare.

I have said that my notes possess no special value, but the making of them was of value to me, as I clearly see now that I have ceased to do anything of the kind. They belonged to a mental apprenticeship, the results of which have never been wholly lost.

But I must say a word of the influence which contemporary literature and living authors had upon me during these golden years ; for golden years they were, not only for myself, but for multitudes of others of similar age and of tastes or pursuits akin to mine. Whatever were the defects and limitations of the mid-Victorian period, it was one of great vitality and fruitfulness so far as literature was concerned. Tennyson and Browning, Carlyle and Ruskin and Froude, Newman and Kingsley, Dickens and Thackeray, and George Eliot were alive and at work. De Quincey, and Landor, and Charlotte Brontë had but recently passed away, and Rossetti, Swinburne, and Morris had arrived. And I knew these living poets and novelists to be alive, and that counted for much. Some of them I had met and conversed with, and others were the friends of friends of mine, and I heard them discussed, not as we discuss Milton, or Scott, or Wordsworth, but as we speak of living men, of their personal history and qualities, their sayings and doings.

To the impressible young the difference between a living author and a dead one is great. He and they belong to the same era, and have the same environment. They are largely moved by the same influences, and confront the problems of life at the same time and under the same aspects ; and this fact, whether realised or not, is more than an introduction, it is a bond of sympathy, latent, but readily made effective and fruitful. For the appreciation of writers of a bygone day, some preparation or training may be necessary ; but a contemporary author has our ear at once, and

if he has it in him to influence anyone at all, he has in young men and women a constituency ready for immediate response. The relation of Tennyson to the generation to which I belonged, as to that which immediately preceded it, furnishes a particularly good illustration of this. His influence over its intellectual life was wellnigh supreme. Revolt, or at least a slackened allegiance, was to come by and by, but there was no sign of it as yet. At the universities, among educated young people generally, and through a wide and varied constituency, everything that he wrote immediately *told*, passing into the very life-blood of his readers, and reappearing in their sentiments and beliefs. My own share in all this came to me earlier than it would otherwise have done through my happy association with those who were older than myself, and were among the most ardent and gifted of Tennyson's disciples. I refer particularly to Burne-Jones and his friends. As early as 1853 he had written to an old schoolfellow: "If Tennyson affords you as many hours of unmitigated happiness as he has to me, you will look with gratitude to anyone who has helped you to appreciate him." Forty years later, after returning from Tennyson's funeral in Westminster Abbey, he wrote: "I'll never forgive the Queen for not coming to it, and I wish Gladstone had. And there should have been street-music, some soldiers, and some trumpets, and bells muffled all over London, and rumbling drums . . . but as he sleeps by Chaucer I dare say they wake and have nice talks in the night, and I have spent much of the early dark morning making up talks for them. I suppose he'll be hurrying

off to Virgil soon." Referring to his undergraduate days, the late Canon Dixon said: "It is difficult for the present generation to understand the Tennysonian enthusiasm that prevailed both in Oxford and in the world. There was the general conviction that Tennyson was the greatest poet of the century. Some held him the greatest of all poets, or at least of all modern poets." Mr. Oscar Browning tells us that when he and Swinburne were at Eton in the early 'fifties, they would race each other to William's, the bookseller, to see which could obtain the earliest copy of a new work of Tennyson.

When my turn came I passed under the spell, as these my gifted predecessors had done. The first stage of fascination occupied my later boyhood, the second filled my early manhood with ideals and aspirations and with ever-renewed delight in Tennyson's mastery of his art and high devotion to truth, and beauty, and the love of God and man. He could not do for me what Wordsworth was to do in later years. He was not a philosophic poet in the sense that Wordsworth was. Less of a mystic and seer, and more of an artist than Wordsworth, he sang, "to one clear harp in divers tones," of the glory and beauty of nature, of the romance and pathos and tenderness of human life, and of the warfare of the soul in man; and setting his song to music in which our language showed that after all the wealth it had bestowed on poets before him, it still had new treasures at his disposal. To all this I responded with all that was within me. I had great part of "In Memoriam" by heart. His shorter poems haunted me with

their "tender grace," his greater odes stirred me like a trumpet ; and his homely tragedies of love and sorrow touched and purified my heart.

One after another those who had been the living guides and masters of my youth have passed away to join the company of the immortal dead "who rule us from their urns"—Thackeray in 1863, Dickens in 1870, Kingsley in 1875, Carlyle in 1881, Rossetti in 1882, Tennyson in 1892, Morris in 1896, Ruskin in 1900. Each has his permanent place of power in English literature. Our children read them and find their pleasure in doing so, but they cannot read them as we did, or find in them what we found who felt their presence among us and rejoiced in it, and were knit to them by bonds of ardent personal devotion.

CHAPTER VII

1868-1881

My Ministry in Waterloo, Manchester, Southport, London and Clifton—Widening Public Work—Deputation to America—Men and Things as I Saw Them There.

MY active life as a minister may be divided into three periods. The first nineteen years, from 1862 to 1881, were spent in the ordinary pastoral ministry, or to use a phrase well understood among us, in circuit work. For the next ten years I was theological tutor at the Handsworth College, Birmingham, whence, in 1891, I was transferred, under somewhat peculiar circumstances to be described hereafter, to the secretaryship of the Wesleyan Missionary Society. This position I held for fourteen years, retiring from it in 1905. Each of these periods had its own conditions of service, and formed a distinct stage of my life, both in its outward aspects, and in those inner developments that lie out of sight, but which as one looks back appear to be among the most important of all. The activities of bygone years have largely passed out of existence, cancelled, as it were, by time and circumstances, but the inner life formed amidst them survives.

My first three years were spent in Burslem, a region of mines and manufactures. After that I was appointed successively to Liverpool, to Waterloo, to Manchester, Southport, London (Kensington), and Clifton. In each of these circuits

I remained three years, except Manchester, which I left, on my own initiative, at the end of two years, and Clifton, whence I was removed at the end of two years to join the newly formed staff at Handsworth. A Wesleyan minister's duties are much the same, so far as their main features are concerned, in any circuit to which he may be appointed. As a Church system Methodism is highly organised, and its practical working is maintained on definite and strongly marked lines. There is in every circuit a superintendent Minister, with a colleague or colleagues. The number of chapels, each with its society of membership and Sunday school and other organisations, may range from two to twenty, or even more, and a plan of the public services to be conducted by ministers and lay preachers is issued every three months.

No one unacquainted with Methodism will quite understand the importance attached to the tri-monthly periods into which the year is divided. The chief court and administrative authority of every circuit is the quarterly meeting of ministers and office-bearers. This meeting, over which the superintendent presides, alone is competent to give formal invitation to a minister to undertake or continue his ministry in it, and is responsible for his support, and it alone can recommend candidates for the ministry. Every quarter the various classes of which the society is composed must be visited by a minister, and the number of members ascertained and entered in the circuit book, the enumeration at the March quarter being reported to Conference as the official number of members for the year. The quarter is the time-unit of Methodist

Church life, and every minister must adjust himself to that primary law of the system to which he belongs. On this foundation of three-month periods the Church year is based, and the whole working organisation comes to full orb every twelve months. Once a year the district synods must meet to review and report upon the work of the circuits ; and once a year the Conference has the whole before it, and can confirm, revise, amend, or annul as it sees fit, subject only to certain fundamental laws, and to precedents and traditions to which great weight is attached. If the quarter is the time-unit of circuit life, the year is the time-unit of the larger connexional life. Each year a new President of the Conference is elected, and all appointments of ministers to circuits expire and must be renewed, or fresh ones made. Thus the system is kept upon the wheels, and everyone concerned must make himself acquainted with its modes of working and fall in with them, or there will be trouble, probably for others, certainly for himself.

I have written this neither in praise nor in blame of the order of things in which I have spent so much of my life, but to make it plain that wherever a Wesleyan minister may be stationed, his course is largely laid down for him beforehand, and must needs resemble in its main features that of all his brethren similarly situated.

But while the main lines of a circuit minister's life are laid down for him on a uniform pattern, and his principal duties so standardised that he can readily take them up at any time or place, there is room within this uniformity for some

differences of method answering to differences of environment and opportunity. In an extensive country circuit, for instance, the preaching places are far apart, and the subjects of his pastoral care are widely scattered. He will have long journeys to make, and if he knows how to drive a horse or ride a bicycle, so much the better. He must also observe times and seasons in a way that is unnecessary in the case of a town minister, taking account of market-days, of hay-harvest and corn-harvest, and of the phases of the moon ; for since he cannot " plan " the moon with a view to his evening meetings, he must arrange his meetings to suit the moon. Then there are differences of mental atmosphere between the north country and the south, and between an agricultural and a manufacturing district, that will not be lost upon him but will have recognition in the character and style of his ministrations. My own experience does not include that of a country circuit proper. I have never had to drive through Devonshire lanes, or feel my way on a dark night among the dykes of Lincolnshire, or needed a guide across the fells of Cumberland. But within a moderate range I have known varied conditions of working that called for some difference of methods on my part. In Liverpool, for instance, I had special charge of a chapel where there were nine hundred members. Everything was on a large scale. There were crowded congregations, and larger classes than I have ever met with elsewhere. Among the regular attendants there was a considerable seafaring element, and I found it possible to carry on a Saturday evening Bible class of forty or fifty

men, mostly of the sailor class. Among them were three or four of the port pilots, men of character and exceptional skill, fine representatives of their order. The others included masters of coasting vessels, mates, ordinary seamen and boys. They were fine, manly fellows, with a good deal of strong sober piety amongst them. There were also a few originals, with views of their own on the fulfilment of prophecies, the lost tribes, and the millennium. I gave them courses of lectures or addresses—one, I remember, on the Apostles' Creed, and another, which with the help of large coloured maps and diagrams proved very attractive, on the travels of St. Paul. In dealing with the voyage and shipwreck I had a perilous course to steer, and occasionally had my seamanship corrected by my critical hearers. But how good it all was for them and for me, and how happy we were over it! Most of them have long since made their last voyage, and some sleep "in their vast and wandering grave."

In no other circuit did I find it possible to get together a class like this, but in Waterloo, in Manchester, and in Clifton I had good Bible classes of ladies. Many of those who attended were thoughtful and intelligent women to whom it was a privilege to give the best that my own studies enabled me to give. There was no need of the magic-lantern, or of diagrams, or of any of the pleasant devices one often has to call in to one's aid in connection with such classes. We studied the discourses of our Lord and the Pauline Epistles, and I found that occasional excursions into the domain of appropriate literature were a useful supplement to exposition.

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In the course of my ministry I have often had occasion to consider what may be called the psychology of congregations. That one congregation differs from another as regards intelligence, receptiveness, and its measure of response to a preacher, every minister knows, but why it is so is sometimes difficult to understand. There are many factors in the problem, some of them obvious, and others not so. Every congregation appears to have an individuality of its own, constituting it a moral unit. A preacher will tell you that he usually preaches with freedom and enlargement of spirit to this or that congregation, and with comparative difficulty to another; that in one church he is conscious of being directly in touch with his hearers, and in another he is little conscious of anything of the kind. Perhaps the incidence of the problem lies elsewhere, and it is he who is not quite the same man in this pulpit that he is in that, but this also is not easy to explain. I will not now pursue the subject further, though I have some interesting memories and experiences connected with it.

I may, however, recall for a moment certain congregations, now for the most part scattered or melted away by time, to which I preached in the early years of my ministry. It was in Burslem and in Hanley that I first felt the influence a congregation may possess, and its power to move the soul of a preacher. I was then very young, and doubtless my sermons were somewhat crude and superficial, but my hearers seemed to communicate to me an eagerness and joy and freedom in which my spirit flamed as though it burnt in oxygen.

In those days audible responses were not uncommon, but I distinguish between these and the spiritual response of which I was aware, and by which I was greatly affected. In Liverpool, again, there was much of the same thing, generated as it were in the soul of the congregation and reaching me in a way that strongly influenced me. I was previously familiar with the thought that one man may move a thousand, and I was now learning that a thousand people may move one man through his whole mental and spiritual being.

When I removed to the Waterloo and Crosby circuit, I left large congregations behind me, and for three years I preached to small ones. Here the conditions were totally different. In each of the two places named there was a nucleus or core of hearers of more than average intelligence and religious development, on whose spiritual preparedness for the best a preacher could give them I might reckon, together with others whom it was not easy to move or influence in any way. I became more restrained, less exuberant in style, less emotional than when I was upborne by congregations of a different type. My two years in Manchester were, for one reason or another, somewhat difficult ones, with less freedom and comfort in preaching than in my previous or succeeding spheres of work. The causes of this were, I think, partly external to myself, and partly internal. I am more willing now than I was then to ascribe my comparative unsucces to errors and want of judgment on my part.

In Southport, to which I removed from Manchester, the conditions of my work were very

stimulating, and gave me three of the best years of my ministry. Our regular congregations were large, and we had in addition a continual stream of visitors. But the special feature was the opportunity for work among the young. At Trinity Chapel, of which I had charge, some two hundred young people belonging to various schools were regular attendants, in addition to the children of resident families. One transept was entirely filled by the girls from Trinity Hall, the well-known school for ministers' daughters; and the other was equally well occupied by the boys from Bicker-ton House, of which Mr. Mathwin, a man of fine character and an excellent schoolmaster, was the head. Another important school was that conducted by the late Misses Simon, then at the height of its popularity and success. To these schools and one or two smaller ones I had the fullest access, with the hearty co-operation of their principals in conducting Bible classes, and in efforts generally for the religious welfare of the pupils. I was further enabled to arrange special services for the young from time to time on week evenings, when our beautiful Trinity Church was well filled. On none of my work in past years do I look back with greater satisfaction. I still meet with the fruits of it in men and women, now at the heads of families, who as boys and girls were part of my charge in Southport between 1873 and 1876.

Removing to London, I next took charge of Warwick Gardens Chapel, Kensington, then a single station, and a somewhat difficult one. With but an interval of a year I followed Dr. Morley Punshon, whose exceptional popularity had, during his ministry

there, brought to a somewhat dejected church an almost bewildering prosperity of crowded congregations and financial ease. It was, in the main, personal to himself and depended upon his presence. While he was there persons from all parts of London, and visitors from the country, flocked to hear him, and it was difficult enough to find accommodation for all who wished to do so. His preaching was an attraction, a fascination, that never failed to fill the chapel; but it was one thing to attract Sunday by Sunday an ever-changing succession of strangers, of people from the country, and of those Sunday-wanderers who, having heard Cardinal Manning, Canon Liddon, and Mr. Spurgeon, must needs hear Punshon also, and another to fix a permanent congregation and build up a Church. To secure these ends he did all that was in his power, but not with any great or lasting success. When, after two years, he was removed to the secretaryship of the Missionary Society, the spell of Warwick Gardens was broken, the crowd forgot its way thither, and things were normal again. Slender congregations, and a faithful remnant of brave devoted souls, remained to give me such help and encouragement as they could when, in September, 1876, I took charge of the little circuit which consisted of Warwick Gardens and a temporary iron chapel near Shepherd's Bush.

No effort of mine could fill the chapel as it had been filled in my distinguished predecessor's time, and there was nothing for it but continuous and detailed labour in caring for the Society, in looking after individuals, and attending to each small point of the Church's welfare. Though mine

was a "West-End" chapel, there was nothing of a West-End character about the congregation, except in one rather peculiar respect. Amongst its most regular and trustworthy members were servants from some of the best houses in the neighbourhood, good, intelligent women, truly religious, and very generous in their support of the Church's work. And it is a pleasure to say that elsewhere in the course of my ministry I have had similar experience, though not quite so marked as at Kensington. Among domestic servants of the higher class I have met with a type of Christian womanhood as worthy of respect and admiration as is to be found in any sphere of life, and marked by a sense of discipline and duty not always manifest in persons of superior social standing. And I should add, as regards my flock at Warwick Gardens generally, that, although mostly poor, or of very narrow means, I have never known a people more generous in all financial matters. Without that generosity I could not have successfully carried out the one enterprise that remains as a visible memorial of my administration of the circuit.

I succeeded, in the face of great difficulties, in replacing our "tin" tabernacle in West Kensington by a permanent and adequate church. It was the only instance in all my ministry in which I began and carried to completion an undertaking of the kind. Many of my brethren have acquired just fame by successful building operations, and some few have suffered eclipse of reputation by schemes that ended in disaster. I had little natural qualification for such an enterprise, but the need was urgent, and I faced it. To build a chapel in

a comparatively impecunious circuit is indeed a serious business. Many opinions have to be consulted, and, if possible, brought into agreement. There are prejudices to be conciliated, and enthusiasms to be restrained or guided. Architectural and building problems respecting site, elevation, internal arrangements, draining, lighting, heating and the like, have to be dealt with, and above all the question of finance is an ever-present nightmare. How we got through it all still remains to me a mystery, but we did get through, and were able to rejoice in "something attempted, something done."

The period of my pastoral ministry was now drawing to a close, though there was nothing as yet to lead me to foresee it. My last appointment to a circuit was to Clifton, whence, after two years, I was removed to Birmingham, and to duties of another kind. Those two years I always reckon as among my best, as regards success in my work, the happy conditions under which I laboured, and the friendships there formed and enjoyed. There was something new and pleasant to me in life in the West of England. Climate, scenery, and the temperament of the people were different from what I had been accustomed to in the Midlands and in the North. The difference, especially the human difference, is not easy to analyse or describe, but there is a difference, as many beside myself have found. But whatever it is, I found it congenial, and took to it kindly. Nowhere have I met with people more loyal and responsive to any effort on the part of their ministers, or more kind and considerate in their personal relations with

them. I was favoured with two exceptionally good and gifted colleagues, the Rev. Mark Guy Pearse and the Rev T. J. Choate. Our chapels were well filled, and our societies increased. Perhaps the brightest feature of all in the Clifton circuit at that time was the abundance of family life of the best kind, happy, well ordered, for the most part fairly prosperous, and alike in the character of the parents and in the promise of the sons and daughters, realising, I think, more fully than I have seen elsewhere the ideal of the Christian home—honoured parents, good sons, bright daughters, abundant hospitality, and the enjoyment of life in its most wholesome aspects. To my wife and my young children our residence in Clifton was as pleasant as it was to me, and our home was as happy a one as any of those around us. My two elder boys went to Clifton College, and though very young entered into the spirit and tradition of that famous school. The downs were close at hand for fresh air, for recreation, and for the beautiful far-reaching views they afford; and Bristol, with its still unsubdued mediævalism, its old churches, its quaint streets, and the ships that lay alongside of them, was a constant source of interest to me and to my boys and girls.

In this brief survey of my course as a circuit minister I have said nothing of my activities over the wider range of the Connexion. All who are acquainted with the working of Methodism are aware that there is, in addition to circuit itinerancy, a further itinerancy of missionary deputations, special services, and meetings of various kinds in which some ministers at least are called upon to

spend a good deal of their time and strength. Into this extra-parochial work I was early drawn, and have been more or less engaged in it during the whole of my ministry. There is a theory among us, consciously or unconsciously held, that every minister belongs to the whole Church, and may reasonably be requisitioned for service here or there, according to the nature of his gifts and the demand for them. It is, of course, for him to remember the primary claims of his own charge, but, these being duly considered, tradition and practice favour the circulation of the more popular preachers and speakers throughout the Connexion at large. The system is not beyond criticism, but on the whole I think has perhaps justified itself. Some circuits are doubtless too ready on occasions deemed important to pass by their own ministers and invite a more or less distinguished "stranger"; and some ministers, by the readiness with which they respond to such applications, have come to neglect their own proper work, and have acquired a roving habit unfavourable to their studies and general mental development; but, on the other hand, the system has been the means of bringing stimulus and uplifting to churches that need them, and of strengthening the sense of the larger life of the Church and ministry where otherwise the field of vision would be narrow, and the standard of things local and seldom revised. But it is not necessary to say all that might be said for and against a practice that has long prevailed and shows no signs of discontinuance. As I have said, I was early drawn into it, and have had perhaps as large experience of it as any of

my contemporaries. In the second year of my ministry I received close upon a hundred invitations to preach or speak in various parts of the country, and for many years such invitations were upon a similar scale. In this way I have visited every important town in England, and many of its villages, preaching, making speeches, or delivering lectures, literally from John o' Groats to Land's End, and from the extremest east to the farthest west of England and Wales, with frequent incursions into Scotland and Ireland.

The time spent in such journeying is a serious consideration, and one that has often troubled me. There is, after all, only a limited number of hours in a man's working life, and that so large a number of them should be spent in railway travelling may well cause searchings of heart. So I compromised with these misgivings, and to some extent redeemed the time thus occupied, by forming the habit of serious and systematic reading on my journeys. This habit I have never lost, and it has been of great service. In the course of the years I have read hundreds of volumes in railway carriages—prose and verse, history, biography, poetry and theology. Whether I have carried light or heavy luggage with me, it has always included books, and I have found little more difficulty in giving my mind to them than if I were in my study. In holiday travel and in foreign countries I have made it a practice as far as possible to read books associated, either in respect of their authorship or their subject, with the places in which I found myself. Thus I have read Shakespeare on the banks of the Avon, and Wordsworth

through the length and breadth of his own lake country, and Scott in the highlands and lowlands of Scotland. In the setting which Paris provides, Molière and St. Simon, Victor Hugo, and Dumas have taken on new life, and being at home themselves, have made me at home with them. Going farther afield, I have read Gibbon's autobiography in Lausanne, and Rousseau by the shores of the Lake of Geneva, and Byron in Venice, and "Romola" in Florence, and Horace and the younger Pliny in Rome, and "Don Quixote" in Spain. On the other side of the Atlantic I almost felt that I had seen and touched the kindly authors themselves when I read Longfellow and Wendell Holmes in Boston, and Mark Twain on a Mississippi steamboat, and Bret Harte in California. Such neighbour-nearness to the wits and poets who have been the idols of one's youth or the friends of maturer years kindles the imagination and warms the heart. It was pleasant at the time, and is good to look back upon.

But there was another and more immediately human interest connected with my journeys. To them I owe many of my most valued friendships, and, speaking generally, a much wider acquaintance with my fellow-creatures than would otherwise have been possible. It is the custom amongst Methodists to entertain in their ever hospitable homes all ministers who come on deputation for any purpose, preaching, lecturing, or taking part in church meetings. I do not think anyone who does not know Methodism from the inside can imagine the extent and the heartiness of hospitality that prevails within its borders. When lecturing

for literary societies I have often, like other lecturers, put up at an hotel, but to do so when engaged in any kind of church work would have been a grievous breach of law and tradition. I have, in consequence, been received as a more or less flying guest into many hundreds of kindly households, rich and poor, of good social standing or lowly grade, and have shared for a while, and in many instances again and again, the home life of every class of people among us. And I would say at once that the memory of it all as I recall it is a happy and a cheering one. I say a cheering one because it has shown me that the better qualities of human nature, the kindly, wholesome aspects of human life, are "in widest commonalty spread," and that, notwithstanding all the defects of our national life, there is among us an immense amount of human kindness, of unselfish affection, and genuine every-day goodness. Doubtless we all believe that this is so, but circumstances have brought it home to me very effectually.

There was often a humorous, and sometimes a picturesque, side to my experiences of life in other people's homes. I have gone from a house where there was no domestic servant to one in which I was embarrassed by the attentions of too many. I have been entertained at dinners of the most elaborate kind, and was served, as it were, in state, and have dined with at least equal satisfaction where the smiling hostess brought in the pie from the oven with her own hands, and set it triumphantly upon the table. I have slept deep-buried in the feather-beds of mighty four-posters, and have lain on thin flock-mattresses

whose contents were congested into unsympathetic lumps that murdered sleep. I recall the friendly farmhouse, and the all-pervading odour that came from the cheese-loft or the apple-room, and the house over the shop that was filled day and night with spicy breezes from the groceries below. I have stayed in a house in which I could not find a single book, in others that had only a few old magazines, a *Life*, say of Mrs. Fletcher, and perhaps a history of the Crimean War, originally issued in parts; and again in another with such a library that I only desired to be left alone in it. Some houses that I have known were dominated by a dog, it may be a tiny creature whose doings were a chief matter of interest and conversation in the family, or a gloomy monster who kept the visitor in a state of perpetual fear. I well remember in a certain home a pet dog that was neither big enough to strike terror nor small enough to be a curiosity, but sufficiently pampered to have become the tyrant of the establishment. Domestic arrangements were largely ordered to suit his convenience. His gentle master and mistress were the unwearied admirers of his imperious ways, and remonstrance never went beyond a mildly deprecatory "Oh, Toby!" On one occasion, when he suddenly snatched and carried off my piece of bread at supper, the only comment of his fond master, uttered in a tone of pride, was "The other night he took a chop off a gentleman's plate and ran away with it."

This cheery condonation of offence was, however, surpassed in a hospitable Irish home where I once spent a night. The weather was warm,

and when I rose in the morning I tried to open my bedroom window. The latch was difficult to move, and when at last I succeeded in forcing it, the sash, which had neither cord nor weight to hold it, fell like the knife of a guillotine, and catching my fingers, cut them severely. It took me some time to stop the bleeding, and when I came down to breakfast my hand was bound up in a handkerchief, and I looked, perhaps, a little pale. "What is the matter with you this morning, Mr. Macdonald?" said my hostess. I told her of my misadventure, with, it may be, just the slightest tone of reproach in my voice at the state of things that had caused it. "And indeed y'ere not the first it has served in that way," was her genial reply. "There was a gentleman here a while ago, and it nearly took his fingers off." With which sympathetic answer how could I be anything but satisfied?

But looking back upon the long succession of homes I have visited during fifty years or more, graver and deeper thoughts present themselves. It is in the people's homes that the real life of our churches has its most searching tests, not in the acts and resolutions of their ruling assemblies, or in their formal pronouncements on great questions. The vitality and spiritual effectiveness of the latter must themselves be tested by results, by their influence upon life and character, in short, by the kind of men and women they produce for the service of God and the general good of mankind. A church that nourishes among her people a strong and worthy family life, a life in which Christian principles are applied to human relationships, has

in such life one of her most undeniable credentials ; while, on the other hand, the failure to do this is not compensated by the most imposing “ notes ” of a historic or ecclesiastical nature. This surely should be reckoned among the “ notes ” of a true church that “ peace and happiness, truth and justice, religion and piety ” are found in the homes of her people.

After the last two years of my pastoral ministry spent in Clifton, the offices I held in the years that followed had to do with the organised life of the Connexion as a whole, and not with that of any particular circuit. Of those two years some three months were spent in a visit to America, of which I must give a brief account.

In the spring of 1880 the Rev. William Arthur and I were sent by our Conference as a deputation to the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church in America, which met in the May of that year in Cincinnati. It was a custom of long standing with us to send a deputation every few years to convey the greetings and good wishes of the parent church of Methodism to the largest of the branches that had sprung from it, a branch far surpassing in dimensions the parent to which it owed its birth. In previous years British Methodism had sent of its best upon this friendly mission, as the names of Dr. Dixon, Dr. Newton, Dr. W. B. Pope, and Dr. Rigg, not to mention others, will show ; but she never had at her disposal for such a purpose a more distinguished representative than Mr. Arthur, or one more certain to receive enthusiastic welcome from the churches on the other side of the Atlantic. He was well known among

them both as a writer and as a preacher and missionary advocate of rare spiritual elevation and power. His volume on the work of the Holy Spirit entitled "The Tongue of Fire," published some years previously, had become a religious classic among ministers and people both as a textbook in theological colleges and as a devotional work widely read and greatly prized. Everywhere we went he was greeted as its author, and reference was made to its influence on religious life not only in Methodism but beyond its borders. Mr. Arthur, though he lived to a good old age, was always a frail and delicate man, and at the time of which I write the feebleness of his voice made public speaking difficult; but the old qualities of commanding and impressive speech were still there, and alike in large and in small assemblies he was eagerly listened to. So far as the deputation was concerned, it did not matter that the junior member of it was young and unknown. Mr. Arthur's presence supplied the magnetic element at all the meetings in which we took part.

One personal pleasure I derived from my visit to the United States. It gave me the opportunity of spending some time with my brother Harry, whom I had not seen for many years. He and his wife were living in New York, and I remained with them during my stay in that city. Our brotherly affection had never diminished, but we had seen nothing of one another during a long period in which each of us had changed and developed in many respects. All the memories we had in common were those belonging to our earlier days. This we soon realised, and the time we were together

was largely spent in bringing our acquaintance up to date, and, in a sense, becoming contemporaries. This we did to our mutual happiness, realising that,

No distance breaks the tie of blood ;
Brothers are brothers evermore.

Reaching Cincinnati on May 4th, I was present at the opening of the General Conference next morning. Methodist Conferences are much alike all the world over, not only in form and procedure, but in spirit and temper, in the terms on which men meet, and the atmosphere that prevails. But the resemblance of one Conference to another and their general conformity to type leave room for certain diversities of race and temperament, as I, who have attended Conferences in many parts of the world, know. At Cincinnati, for instance, our place of meeting gave me "a gentle shock of mild surprise." Pike's opera-house had been secured for certain hours of the day for the meetings of the Conference. The stage was assigned to the bishops, the floor of the house to the delegates, and the public occupied the boxes and gallery. After the stipulated hours the opera-house reverted to its accustomed uses. The enterprising management, judging that a lively contrast between the business of the morning and that of the evening would be appreciated by the public, announced for the evenings a new play entitled *Saints and Sinners*—with what success I know not. Then on Sunday afternoon Colonel Ingersoll, the well-known anti-Christian lecturer, took possession, and discoursed on "What must we do to be saved?"

a text that gave him all he wanted by way of starting-point for an attack on the Apostolic answer to that question. So were men and things mixed within the walls of Pike's opera-house that week. No one appeared disturbed by these incongruities, and to a remark of mine that it seemed a queer place to hold a Methodist Conference in, I received the reply : " Well, I guess it's about the best use you could put a theatre to."

The most eloquent and moving speech I heard during the Conference was that of a negro delegate, who pleaded that of four bishops then to be elected, one should be a coloured man. The Conference was impressed by the speech but not convinced, and after a temperate and friendly discussion the proposal was rejected. Judging from those of them to whom I have listened, as preachers or speakers, the negro has no native or racial spring of eloquence in him corresponding, say, to that of the Maori or the Red Indian, with whom the gift of oratory seems innate ; but he is susceptible and imitative, and readily adopts modes of speech that take his fancy. As he advances in education and mixes in civil and religious life with men of European descent, the more does he seek to do as they do, in his way of speaking as in other matters. But he cannot quite get away from his own temperament, which is not that of the white man, nor is it desirable, I think, that he should do so. Racial characteristics have their meaning and their value in the general life of mankind, and the tendency of modern civilisation to flatten them out to a common type is by no means wholly good. The picturesqueness of their variety is

something ; and beyond that, mental and emotional diversities among the people of the earth serve to resist the tyrannous preponderance of particular types, and to direct the development of the whole towards harmony rather than uniformity. The clear-cut shrewdness of the American and the matter-of-factness of the Englishman are excellent qualities, but neither of them constitutes the one authorised version of human nature, and variations from it are desirable. The subject is too large for further discussion here, and I will content myself with saying that I hope the negro in America, however good an American he becomes, will still have something that is African in his emotional nature, his imagination, and his affections.

The preachers who most impressed me during my stay in the country were Henry Ward Beecher and Bishop Simpson. The former was regarded by many of his countrymen as the greatest of living Americans. A many-sided man of great gifts, he had played many parts in the national life as politician, journalist and minister of religion, and was in consequence enthusiastically admired by some and cordially disliked by others. In any case, he counted for a good deal, and was a person to be reckoned with. He had a commanding presence and manner, great powers of speech, readiness of resource, and intimate acquaintance with American life and character in the churches and outside of them, at the White House and in Congress, in the backwoods and at the centres of commerce and finance. I heard him preach one Sunday morning in his own church at Brooklyn. The sermon was strong, sensible, and devout, with

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none of those excursions into politics and the topics of the day in which he sometimes indulged.

Bishop Simpson appealed to me much more strongly as a preacher. He was then drawing toward the close of a great career as the foremost man in American Methodism. He was influential in the policy and administration of the church, but his main distinction was that of a preacher of the Gospel, simple, earnest, and at times overwhelming in appeal and exhortation. I heard him preach a never-to-be-forgotten sermon to some six thousand people on one of the hottest, most oppressive Sunday afternoons I can remember. It was in the music-hall, Cincinnati. I was by his side on the platform, and assisted him in the earlier part of the service. As I looked upon the vast audience, close packed, sweltering in the tropical heat which the fluttering of hundreds of fans failed to temper, and then upon the preacher, his tall, spare form bowed with age, it seemed impossible that he could contend with the physical difficulties of the occasion. When he gave out his text his thin, sharp voice was scarcely audible, but it gathered strength and incisiveness as he proceeded, and he held his hearers with a grasp that never relaxed, save when at intervals in his discourse the people readjusted themselves in their seats and sought relief in change of attitude. Then deep silence again, every eye fastened upon the preacher, every ear intent on catching his every word. And so it was to the end. I have seldom seen a more striking instance of the mastery of one mind over many, or, let me say, of the power of a sermon essentially simple in its evangelical

aim to hold a great body of hearers in spell-bound, almost awe-stricken attention. One thing struck me in the preacher's style. His sentences were short, seldom or never complex or developed through stages of thought. Each was complete in itself, and in their rapid succession, striking, as it were, again and again upon the same spot, they produced an effect comparable to that of repeated blows falling on a given object until its resistance was overcome. How far Bishop Simpson was a student of the arts of speech and employed a well-considered method, I do not know, but his method, whether instinctive or deliberately chosen, was extremely effective.

From Cincinnati Mr. Arthur and I travelled to St. Louis, to pay a fraternal visit to the Conference of the African Methodist Episcopal Church, then in session. It was, I believe, the first time that representatives of the British Conference had paid such a visit, and our reception was a particularly hearty one. We found all the formalities of a Conference rigorously observed, and there was something at once amusing and pathetic in the efforts of our coloured brethren to be as dignified, not to say stately, in their proceedings as possible, and yet do justice to their emotions. There was a constant struggle between the expression and repression of feeling, with alternate victory for the one and the other. A resolution of welcome that I remember had a long preamble setting forth the greatness of the British people, the glories of British Methodism, and the high quality of the deputation with which they were favoured, concluding thus: "Resolved, that we do rejoice

with exceeding joy." And this they did, with much shaking of hands all round to the singing of hymns, or, shall I say, to the singing of hymns emphasised and punctuated by the shaking of hands. At various stages of the reception I found myself on the tremulous ground that lies between laughter and tears.

In the evening I preached to the Conference and a large general congregation. I was the only white man present. As the daylight died away and the shadows deepened the sea of dark faces before me grew dim and dimmer. Forms were no longer distinct. But for a sigh now and then, or a half-uttered pious exclamation, all was dark and silent. It was a gathering of shadows in shadow-land that I was addressing, and I, too, was to them but a shadow and a voice. There was something ghost-like in it all, in strange contrast with the full-blooded, smiling humanity amongst which I moved an hour or two before.

Next morning while at breakfast in my hotel, I noticed that the negro waiter who attended to me was evidently wishing to say something, and suffering from suppression of speech. At length, coming close to me and stooping so as to speak privately in my ear, he said: "I heard you preach last night, sah; very good sermon, sah; I couldn't have preached dat sermon if I'd stopped on my knees till de day ob doom, sah."

"Possibly not," said I, "but I have no doubt you can do many things that I cannot do." "Yes, sah, I can, sah," was his quick reply; "I can stand at de door ob de dinin' room when de gentlemen come in to dinner, and take der hats, fifty,

hundred ob dem, and when dey go out again, I gib every gentleman his own hat, make no mistake, sah.” “ Well,” said I, “ I could not do that.” “ No, sah, you couldn’t,” he said proudly, and yet kindly that I might not feel discouraged, “ you couldn’t.” “ How do you manage it ? ” said I. “ *Imagination, sah,*” was his reply ; “ I look at de empty hats when I’ve put dem on de shelf till I see de faces come under ’em ! ” After this high flight our conversation moved to a lower level and ran on ordinary topics.

While in Cincinnati I received a formal invitation to visit Vanderbilt University, Nashville, Tennessee, and take part in the proceedings of the annual commemoration then about to be held. It was further pressed upon me in the kindest manner by Bishop McTyeire, of the M.E. Church South, who was good enough to claim me as his guest during my visit, and to him was due much of the pleasure I was to receive from it. This university was founded and endowed by the munificent family whose name it bears, and owed much to the organising and administrative ability of the bishop, who was consulted in the matter from the first. He had an essentially statesmanlike mind, a strong grasp of affairs, and considerable power of managing men. With an easy manner, never in a hurry, at all times approachable, accustomed to take broad and genial views of men and things, he was a strong and capable leader, generally carrying others with him, but able to go on alone if necessary. He had, in addition, an abundant sense of humour, and considerable power of giving expression to it. Bishop McTyeire was perhaps

the finest specimen of the southerner that I met with. As, I suppose, everyone who knows America at all is aware, there is a southern type of American differing in many respects from that to be met with in the North. There is no need to compare the one with the other. I am glad to have friends among both, and I appreciate alike the qualities they have in common and those in which they differ.

At the university I found some able and interesting men among the professors, and a comprehensive and well-graded system of education that included art, science, medicine, and theology. One of the ceremonies connected with the commemoration was quite new to me, furnishing matter for thought as well as considerable amusement. It was an oratorical competition in which the students contended for the prize for eloquence in orations—speeches would be too tame a word to describe them—of the most high-flying and flamboyant type. Considerable ability was shown by the orators, who took the matter very seriously, as did the audience. No figure of speech was too bold, no flight too venturesome, no language piled too high. What chiefly set me thinking was the difference of temperament which made these exercises not only possible but matter for delight both to speakers and hearers, while they would have been absolutely impossible in one of our English universities, where they would have been received with ironical jeers or smothered in inextinguishable laughter. The American, with all his keen shrewdness and grim humour, is more sentimental than the Englishman, less afraid of showing emotion, and more at home in the trans-

cidental. Moreover, the sense of humour, strong in both of them, is different in the two races, each having its own fields of vision, its points of view, and its characteristic modes of expression. I think the Englishman laughs more than the American, though the American is quite as good, if not better, at making other people laugh. But they do not always laugh at the same things, by reason, I suppose, of that difference of temperament which is easy to perceive and so difficult to describe, much more to account for.

On commemoration day it fell to my lot to make a speech—I am afraid it was announced as an oration—and I surrendered myself to my environment as far as was possible. At the close of it, and of the applause with which it was rounded off, one of the students solemnly ascended the platform, and to my immense embarrassment presented me, on behalf of a lady in the audience, with a huge bouquet. I rose and bowed in the direction of the lady who had thus honoured me, and sat down again. Then my troubles began. I did not know what to do with the bouquet, which seemed to grow bigger and bigger as I held it, first in one hand, then in the other, and then in both hands at once. For the rest of the morning it was my master and I its slave. I tried to treat it lightly and carelessly, but it insisted on being treated seriously. When I did so it seemed to suggest that my manner was too formal and constrained, as of one unaccustomed to handling a bouquet. When I put it on the floor, and indeed thrust it under my chair, something within me cried shame, and I picked it up again and nursed

it uneasily, and longed for the close of the session. When that came I was hoping to leave it behind me, when I received word that I was to be presented to the lady who had sent me the bouquet. This made the thought of leaving it behind me impossible, and a moment or two afterwards, with the bouquet on one arm and the lady on the other, I walked in procession to the room where we were to take luncheon, after which I took the bouquet, or it took me, home to my host's, where the spell was broken and my bondage ceased.

Tennessee was and is essentially a southern state, and shared the fortunes, as it shared the sentiments, of the South in the Civil War. My visit to Nashville, it should be remembered, was in the year 1880, that is to say, within little more than fifteen years of the close of the war. Practically every white man over five and thirty years of age I met down South had fought in it. Memories of the great conflict were still fresh. Its political and social results were not yet completely adjusted, and although great progress had been made in the establishment of the new order of things, all wounds were not healed nor had all passions subsided. In these circumstances the conversations that I had with persons of all classes were full of interest to me. I was careful not to express any opinions of my own but was eager to hear those of others, which I had many opportunities of doing. One gentleman in particular, of the old aristocratic planter class, gave me a good deal of information as to the "ante-bellum" state of things in the South. He spoke with much moderation and good sense, though naturally not quite

from the point of view of the militant and now triumphant North. Two things he said which may be recorded here. Speaking of the abolition of slavery, and of the downfall of the social order with which it was connected, he said : " The old state of things is gone, sir, it won't come back again, its day was over, and for my part I wouldn't bring it back if I could do so by lifting my hand, though it has made a poor man of me. Once I was somebody, now I am nobody. And it is all for the best, I hope ; but you must not ask us to say that we enjoyed the process of being ruined."

His other remark had to do with the negro. " The negro, sir," said he, " is naturally a religious man, and he likes his religion strong, no half-colours, no fine shades. He is generally either a Catholic or a Methodist, or a Baptist, and then he knows where he is. And he has a kindly nature when kindly treated, which he generally was, whatever our friends in the North may say. And I'll give you an instance of his natural gentleness. I know this part of the country well, and I tell you, sir, that during the war there were whole districts where there was not a single white man ; they were all in the war, only their wives and families remained at home surrounded by thousands of negroes. And when by Lincoln's proclamation they were all made free in a day, that great transition, the greatest that can take place in a people's history, was unaccompanied by a single act of violence on their part."

It is no part of my intention to give a detailed account of my travels in America. Suffice it to say that I had a two days' voyage down the Mis-

issippi, and shorter ones on the St. Lawrence and the Hudson. I visited the two greatest physical wonders of the Continent, the Mammoth Cave of Kentucky and the Falls of Niagara, and considerable portions of Lower Canada. In Chicago I came in contact with American institutions in some of their most characteristic forms. I was present at the convention of the Republican party which, after a prolonged and ineffectual contest between the supporters of General Grant, for whom a third term of office was sought, and Mr. J. G. Blaine, nominated General Garfield as their candidate for the Presidency. A few months later he was elected, and after a short term of office died by the hand of an assassin, as his great predecessor, Abraham Lincoln, had done. I was also a spectator at the Women's Rights Convention over which Miss Susan B. Anthony presided. I had by no means "come to scoff," but I am bound to say the elements of comedy which that convention supplied gave occasion for not unlawful mirth to the few mere men admitted to one of the galleries. Miss Anthony needed all her wits, of which she had a ready and sufficient store, to deal with the interruptions, challenges and rejoinders of some not too orderly delegates. One resolution that was unanimously carried particularly took my fancy, and that not so much for the body or substance of it, as for the preamble that led up to it. Seldom have I known the obvious stated in more epigrammatic form, or made to look more like a philosophic discovery. It ran thus: "Whereas man is a human being, *and nothing more*; and woman a human being, *and*

nothing less." Needless to say, all conventional limitations of woman's sphere in Church and State, in public and in professional life, were swept away by the resolution that derived its strength from this impressive statement.

Having spent eleven weeks in the United States and in Canada, travelled widely, made many friends and received much kindness, I reached my home in Clifton on July 19th, 1880, after a pleasant and uneventful voyage from New York.

By the following Conference I was appointed theological tutor in the newly established college at Handsworth, and thither I removed with my family in the September of 1881.

CHAPTER VIII

1881-1891

Appointed Theological Tutor at Handsworth College, Birmingham
—Clerical Students—Dr. Dale—Beginnings of Authorship—
My Aims and Efforts as a Lecturer—Travels on the Continent,
its Motives and Results.

THE ten years of my theological tutorship at Handsworth College, Birmingham, 1881-91, carried me gently and happily into middle life. I was in my fortieth year when I entered upon it; I was in my fiftieth when I was called away to work of another kind. It was the central period with me, youth not very far behind, old age not yet in sight. My health was good, my home unshadowed by sorrows, and my duties altogether congenial. I had not sought release from pastoral work, but was not sorry to be freed from certain responsibilities and cares connected with it, and to be brought back again to much prized studies that had been of necessity interrupted. I believed that in becoming a teacher I should be more than ever a student, and I found that it was so. Certainly I had no such accumulation of learning that I could afford to live idly upon my capital, and even had it been so I could not have been content to draw upon stores to which I was making no addition. As it was, the habit of regular teaching renewed the habit of systematic study, the duties of my lecture-room sending me back to my books and my desk mentally quickened and spurred.

My students, as was implied in the very constitution of the college, were all accepted candidates for the ministry. In this there was, from the point of views of myself and my colleagues, much advantage, and possibly some disadvantage. It gave us undoubtedly an exceptional hold on the conscience and goodwill of the men, and created a sense of brotherhood reaching, as it were, across the difference in our age and standing. We had travelled the paths of candidature that they were now treading, and the life to which they were looking forward was one of which we had had experience. This formed a bond of sympathy felt on both sides. With few exceptions their moral and religious tone was high, in some instances impressively so. But with regard to the intellectual life of the college, I sometimes wished for a slight infusion of the lay mind among us, both on the staff and among the students, to qualify the prevailing ministerialism—I do not say “clericalism”—inevitable in our circumstances. We were all members of one profession, incipient or fully fledged, no other type of mind being represented. To this not only did the prescribed course of studies bear witness, but even common conversation and much of the vocabulary in daily use. But when teaching is thus specialised, and all who receive it are preparing for the same life-calling, the interests of general intellectual culture are in some danger. The average man is apt to undervalue knowledge or mental effort that does not seem to bear directly upon the calling he has in view. In the case of technical schools, and institutions for training in medicine, engineering and mechanics, it is acknow-

ledged that they leave large provinces of the mind untouched, and that the proper education of a man calls for much that they do not supply ; and this is true in its measure of theological colleges also, unless their course of teaching is *post-graduate*, following a sufficient training in other studies. But when that is not the case, when it is a theological college that provides the only systematic and effective teaching that a man receives, the danger to which I have referred is never far away. Definite theological studies are, in the case of men preparing for the Christian ministry, absolutely essential, but in my judgment they will thrive best in close association with that of the "humanities" generally, the *artes ingenuæ* in which the intellectual life of man has had its fullest expression. But this question need not here be further discussed. With some such thoughts, then, in my mind, I ventured to go a little outside the subjects usually assigned to a theological chair, and so developed what a politician might call "an unauthorised programme." Moving from my classroom to the library, I gave informal lectures on books and on influential writers. Attendance at these lectures was optional, but practically all the students came to them, and I had reason to be satisfied with the interest they awakened. As an old student said to me not long ago : "I am afraid I have forgotten most of what you said to us about Butler's Analogy, but I shall never forget your lectures on Wordsworth."

Of the men who passed through my classes at Handsworth, some have died comparatively early, but the majority now form a considerable part

of the central strength of the Wesleyan ministry in this country and on the mission field, men past their youth, but not beyond their prime. Some have already attained distinction, and are steadily moving towards distinction still more marked. I meet with them from time to time at conferences, at synods, and in their various spheres of labour throughout the country, always with pleasure on my part, and generally, I think, on theirs. The relation between an old professor and his former students is a kindly one, not without its pathos.

While my official duties had the first claim on my time and thought, they left room for work of other kinds, of which I may briefly speak. In coming to live in Birmingham I was returning to one of the homes of my childhood with which I had never quite lost touch. Its streets were familiar to me, its notable town hall, its massive churches of St. Philip and St. Paul, with their spacious churchyards, and the suburbs on the northern or Staffordshire side. I had played as a boy in the fields where our college and my own residence now stood, and though not Birmingham born, I shared in some measure the local patriotism for which its people are distinguished. There were families still living there of which I had some remembrance, and they of me, and I found an old school-fellow or two with whom the friendship of our schooldays was renewed. These and some other things helped to make me feel at home in my new sphere, and to draw me into the local life as one who was not altogether a stranger; so that when I had organised my classes, arranged my subjects, and generally laid down the lines on which I

intended to proceed, I felt wishful to engage in some kind of work in the town if I could find any for which I was suited.

Full of good desires, and with a certain amount of pent-up energy waiting for employment, I was somewhat amused to receive a kindly offer of nomination to a body known by its friends as the Liberal Two Hundred, by its opponents as the Radical Caucus. This offer I respectfully declined, not feeling in any way qualified for it. But in course of time a modest enterprise more within my range was suggested to me. The proposal was that I should conduct a noonday service in town on one day in the week. We got into communication with the authorities of the Young Men's Christian Association, who placed their hall in Needless Alley at our disposal, and assured us of their sympathy and co-operation, as also did ministers and laymen of various churches. A small but efficient choir was secured, and I carried on these services for some years, preaching a short sermon week by week, not without blessing to myself, and, I believe, to others. Under no other conditions have I been able in the course of my long ministry to preach with such continuity and concentration. Mine has been a wandering ministry, and during the years of my tutorship in Birmingham my Sundays found me in every part of the land, never two Sundays in succession at the same place. So much the more did I prize the fixed hour, week by week, when, with all the world's business in full tide around us, I preached to the same congregation in the heart of Birmingham—the same, though ever

changing and renewed. Many letters reached me from those to whom that hour brought help and healing.

Later on I was brought into closer connection with the public life of the city by becoming a member of the school board. I was elected, after a lively election fight, as one of the "Bible-reading" six, or eight, I forget which. The dominant party at that time and in that place, from motives that I could understand but did not share, was opposed to religious instruction of any kind, favoured handbooks of secular ethics in place of the New Testament, and prohibited the singing of a hymn or the recital of the Lord's Prayer in school-hours. On the issue thus raised I fought my election. I felt a certain difficulty in doing so on account of my intimate relations with Dr. R. W. Dale, whose friendship was one of the privileges of my Birmingham life. He was a pronounced anti-denominationalist, and saw no way to what he considered a just solution of a real difficulty but the exclusion of religious teaching from the schools altogether. There was irony in the fact that he, the most influential religious teacher in Birmingham, should strongly oppose religious teaching of any kind in the schools where many thousands of the children of Birmingham received all the educational training that fell to their lot. To him his position, however, was not at all paradoxical. While encouraging by all means in his power voluntary and denominational teaching of religion within their respective spheres, he contended, first and last, that it should not be given in schools established by Act of Parliament, maintained by rates and

taxes, and necessarily including the children of persons of all kinds of religious belief, and of no religious belief at all. It was of no use to quote to him the conscience clause, and the protection it afforded to those who cared to claim its benefit ; or to remind him that Sunday-schools and similar voluntary organisations left a large part of the child-life of the city wholly untouched. He had thought the matter out, and accepted the results to which his principles led, regarding them as, in present circumstances, unavoidable, though doubtless to be regretted. After my candidature was announced, we discussed the subject fully and freely, and it ended in our agreeing to differ. But it should be said of my large-hearted friend that although urged to do so, he refused to take the field against me during the election. I was thus spared the pain of coming into public conflict with him, as well as the controversial disadvantage at which it would have placed me, for I was under no illusion as to his superiority to myself in the power of presenting a case and dealing with an audience, more especially a Birmingham audience. So I won my election and did not lose my friend.

I may say here that I have met with few men whose mental and moral personality has impressed me more than that of Dr. Dale. The qualities that come to my mind when I think of him are those of a large and noble nature—robustness of mind, masculine vigour both of thought and of expression, clearness of vision, and grasp of principles. He loved to take a large view of any question with which he had to deal. He would lift it, if possible, to a high level, and give it the

benefit of the ideas that put it at its best. If it were a cause or an interest that he adopted, it wore for him its noblest aspect ; if it were one that he opposed or repudiated, it was no sorry version of it that he cared to combat, he would fight it on its own showing, and on the ground most favourable to it. It was due in part to circumstances, and in part to his temperament and cast of mind, that he was through a great part of his life a fighting man, but like many another such, he had a tender heart, with great warmth of affection and capacity for friendship. His ministry could not but be an intellectual ministry, inasmuch as it was the outcome of a well-stored and ever-labouring mind ; but his was not intellectual preaching in the sense in which the term is sometimes used, to describe a kind of lecturing on religious and ethical subjects that draws but little upon the special contents of the Gospel, and leaves the heart and conscience of the hearer all but untouched. He had a deep sense of the mystery and glory of man's redemption by the Son of God, and of the supernatural elements of the Christian life, never seeking to bring them within the compass of rationalist explanation. For many things counted sacred or all but sacred in human tradition, he had but little regard, but his awe and reverence and love toward our Lord and Saviour could hardly be surpassed. They were the strength of his life, and gave to his ministry its inspiration and power. I would say again that to have known him as I did was one of the chief privileges of the years I spent in Birmingham.

From my Handsworth days I have also to

date the beginning of such literary work as I have been able to engage in, with one slight exception. For some years previously I had assisted the Rev. Dr. W. B. Pope in the editorship of the "London Quarterly Review" by revising and proof-reading, and by writing short notices of current publications. This familiarised me to some extent with the methods of the press and the use of editorial pen and ink, but it led to nothing in the way of sustained and responsible writing. I wrote nothing over my own name, and my contributions seldom exceeded a single page of the less important part of the *Review*. But I was now desirous of doing something more than this, both for my own mind's sake, which needed the discipline involved in expressing itself with accuracy and care, and as the means of making some small contribution, if it might be so, to literature or to theology. Since then I have been so frequently impressed by the superabundance of the world's output of published matter as to be touched with shame, almost with repentance, for having added to its intolerable quantity. But human nature is weak, and few passions are more compelling than that which drives men and women to authorship, few pleasures more seductive than that of handling one's new-born volume—"a poor thing, but mine own." If it be successful, satisfaction is at its height; if unsuccessful, there is always comfort in the belief that people are, after all, poor judges of literary values. So, like others before me, I became an author, and if I have made no great impression on the world thereby, I have had my pleasure personally and in private, with here and there

the testimony of others that they have found something in my writings that they were glad to have.

My first production while at Handsworth was the "Fernley Lecture," delivered at the conference of 1881, at which I was appointed to my theological tutorship. Though my designation as Fernley Lecturer had no connection with that appointment, the occasion served for a theological manifesto on my part, a statement of some of the beliefs and principles with which I entered upon my office. The title of the lecture was "The Dogmatic Principle in relation to Belief." From the nature of the subject and its mode of treatment, my lecture could only appeal to those interested in theological studies. These form but a small portion of the community, and it had few readers. I have seen it quoted now and then by theological writers, but, for the rest, it has slumbered, I imagine, on those topmost shelves where seldom-visited books gather in dusty seclusion, or on those lower ones to which volumes of high specific gravity ultimately sink.

A year or two later I wrote a short "Life of Fletcher of Madeley," one of a series of biographies published by Messrs. Hodder and Stoughton. I think I was pleased with it at the time, though I see now that it might have been more thorough and effective. It contained, however, some material that had not previously seen the light, as I had access to certain Fletcher manuscripts unknown both to Benson and to Tyerman, which perhaps gave it some advantage over previous "Memoirs."

My next literary venture was on a larger scale,

and involved far more labour and responsibility. I was asked by the executors of the late Dr. Morley Punshon to write his "Life." Some three or four years had elapsed since his death, and there was some surprise, I may almost say complaint, that no biography of him had appeared, or was announced as forthcoming. It is difficult for the present generation to realise the position he had occupied among us for more than thirty years. His popularity as a preacher and lecturer exceeded anything in our history or traditions, and was sustained by the affectionate admiration in which he was personally held. He had in addition a capacity for affairs and an influence in our deliberative assemblies which made him an influential church leader, so that he had long been prominent, if not pre-eminent, in the church-life of Methodism. When he was taken away it seemed as though nothing could ever fill the gap that was left. Nor was it ever filled. It closed in time, as such gaps do close, not by the appearance of a successor, but by such changes and developments as are ever taking place, by new births of thought and new forms of life.

That there should be no permanent record of Morley Punshon's career and remarkable powers, no portrayal of the character and personality by which they were directed, was not to be thought of, but none of his immediate contemporaries seemed available for the task. I was finally requested to undertake it, and after some hesitation consented. For nearly three years it weighed upon me somewhat heavily. I could only give to it the time that other duties and engagements

allowed. I had to deal with masses of material, letters, diaries, documents official and private, and the personal memories of many people, together with suggestions and proposals of various kinds, some of them helpful, and others decidedly not so. I had to discuss events in which many persons still living were intimately concerned, and on which conflicting views were still vigorously represented. To master my materials, and then to assimilate and reduce them to proportion, to satisfy myself that my conception of my honoured friend's character and career was on the whole a just and true one, required some time and much thought. To one difficulty only of those I experienced will I refer. In Morley Punshon's life were two strains not easy to present in their relation to each other. Its outward course was uniformly brilliant and successful, a triumphant progress from beginning to end. But there was a pathetic side to his life, known only to his intimate friends, and fully realised, perhaps, by but few of them. He suffered in health, in spirits, in nerves to an extent of which the public that heard him so gladly was little aware. It was probably the price, or part of the price, he paid for his extraordinary exertions. In addition to this, even when his popularity was at its highest, he was never free from heart-searchings and questionings, from self-depreciation, from hopes that trembled, and from fears that returned upon him. Morley Punshon was one of the humblest of men. Doubtless his humility was as a guardian-angel given for his protection against the perils of popularity, but that angel's ministry, however wholesome, sometimes

troubles the "water of refreshing"—*aquam refectio-
tionis*—making it bitter to the taste. Then for years he had affliction in his home, so that he could not leave it without anxiety, or return to it without foreboding, and yet must needs be coming and going on duties that carried him to every part of the land. All this is seen and felt in his diaries and more confidential letters, and convinced me that no presentation of his life-history would be just that did not show this side of a career that at first sight appeared to have no shadow on its brightness, no undertone of suffering or touch of pathos in it. I could not omit so essential an element of his life, one moreover that added to its spiritual significance and beauty, though I was blamed by some for what they considered the undue prominence given to it. The "Life" appeared in October, 1887, was well received, and had, for a book of its kind, a large circulation. From the publisher's point of view it was the most successful book I have written.

I have already described my first youthful effort as a lecturer. That now lay many years behind me, though often recalled for the humour of it and of the high-flying style which concealed the slenderness of my equipment alike from myself and from my hearers. But the early years of my ministry gradually dispelled some illusions, and among them the illusion of eloquence—of eloquence, that is, as I had thought of it, as a thing in itself, to be sought for its own sake, having a reward and glory of its own apart from thought, of which it is the expression, and instruction or persuasion, of which it may be the means. I had set a false

value upon well-rounded sentences, upon the pleasant sequence of words, and the carefully conducted climax. When, however, I settled down to real work, and had to preach and speak to Staffordshire potters and other work-a-day people, these ideals began to give way. The atmosphere was unfavourable to them, the conditions did not suit them. So after a while I shed my oratorical feathers, laid aside some very ornate discourses as of no further use to me, and groped about somewhat disconsolately for other methods of speech than those by which I had thought to secure fame. There is no need to trace minutely the process of readjustment that followed, or the steps by which I descended to humbler levels of style and diction. Perhaps I went to the other extreme when I adopted as a motto, "Take care of your thoughts, and your words will take care of themselves." Henceforth that, or something like it, would describe my way of preparing for the pulpit and platform.

But in abandoning the oratoric ideals that had inspired my early attempts at lecturing, I did not break with the lecturer's art itself. On the contrary, I began to take a more serious view of it, and of the possibility of making it a useful supplement to my ministry. That lectures on literature, art, and history are no substitute for the preaching of the Gospel, I saw as clearly then as I do now. But my congregations contained a large proportion of people, more particularly young people, who would be all the better for any help I could give them in the matter of reading and of thinking. They were well disposed towards religion, and many of them had definitely entered upon

the Christian life ; but with a view to its development, and to the building up of character as a whole, it was most desirable that the mental life should be enlarged. It could not be good that the historic past should be for the most part a blank to them, or that they should have few ideas beyond those suggested by their immediate surroundings, and that frequently in crude and conventional form. I wished that their minds might travel a little more widely, so as to get sight of things that were as yet below their horizon, and make acquaintance with some at least of the master-minds to which the world owes so much of its higher life. Such mutual improvement societies as were to be found here and there were of little value intellectually, a discussion, say, of the character of Oliver Cromwell, carried on by fluent youths who had neither read nor thought upon the subject, being about their highest achievement. That I do not exaggerate will, I think, appear from a note I received from a young man connected with such a society, informing me that he had undertaken to read a paper on China at the next meeting, and "could I give him any information about China?"

Between the state of things revealed by that request and a really trained mind, there stretched a space that I could not hope to bridge. That, however, was no reason why I should attempt nothing at all. I was familiar both with college lectures and with popular lectures such as at that time drew large and eager audiences to Exeter Hall, and it occurred to me that the lecture which should owe something to each of the two ideals was not altogether beyond my reach, and might

be of service. On the one hand, it was absolutely necessary to be interesting, and on the other, to convey a reasonable amount of information, and what was still more important, awaken interest, in the subject, and the desire to know more about it, and generally, give that gentle shove to the mental powers which sets them moving towards the object of desire. The lecture would be successful which led the hearer to follow any of the paths of reading and of thought which it suggested, or at all events to take a truer view of its subject than before ; while the lecture, however pleasant to listen to at the time, would be a failure that began and ended with itself, adding nothing to knowledge or the desire for knowledge, and touching no spring of curiosity or inquiry.

With thoughts like these I became a lecturer in the early years of my ministry, and I have been so ever since. For more than fifty years I have lectured in every part of the country, in churches, halls, and schoolrooms, to audiences great and small, literate and illiterate, denominational and undenominational. Science I have never touched, being altogether unversed and incompetent in that sphere. I have sought my subjects in religion, in literature, in history, in biography. A certain popularity of style and treatment is necessary, though I have not always succeeded in hitting it ; but it is quite possible at the same time to be more educative, not to say didactic, than the hearers are aware of, and I think with pleasure of what the conditions of lecturing have allowed me to say on behalf of the things I value most. At first my lectures were given chiefly in Wesleyan school-

rooms, but as the range of my engagements widened, I visited halls and assembly rooms occupied by literary societies and other associations all over the land, in Birmingham, Manchester, Bradford, Leeds, and Glasgow, in Exeter, Cambridge, Norwich, Hull, Newcastle, and other towns too numerous to mention. I have had much experience of chairmen, some cultivated, polite, and capable, others homely, eccentric, and in some few instances amusing beyond description. I have also had experience of no chairman at all, making my platform entrances and exits in unrelieved solitude. Well do I know the chairman who seeks to exhaust the subject before the lecturer begins, and him also who at its close recapitulates it point by point, indicating where he agrees or disagrees with what has been said. And how one audience differs from another, every lecturer knows, though he will tell you he does not know why it should. He never gets to the bottom of that psychological problem. At one place he finds a tradition of cheerfulness which expresses itself in frequent and genial applause; and at another a tradition of frosty, unsympathetic silence rigidly observed throughout. Some audiences are sentimental, others humorously disposed, others again matter-of-fact in every fibre. In America I have lectured to an audience that punctuated every other sentence with hand-clapping, and to another that it still gives me a cold chill to think of. My experience on the latter occasion was so remarkable that it deserves to be recorded. My subject was a serious one, and the audience equally serious, including a large number of ministers and other presumably thoughtful persons. I began,

I opened out my theme, I discussed it, I argued, I illustrated amid profound silence, a silence that indicated neither interest nor indifference, neither pleasure nor disapproval. I had no clue whatever to the feelings of my hearers. They sat, they looked at me, they listened; that was all. As one accustomed to public speaking, I know something of the *rapport* usually established between a speaker and an audience. It may be of many kinds, ranging from extreme friendliness to antagonism. But here was no *rapport* at all. Every eye was fixed on me, but all the eyes together told me nothing except that they were looking at me. I began to feel very lonely, and my voice sounded to me as that of one speaking in a desert, or in "caverns measureless to man." A quarter of an hour passed, then a second quarter of an hour, but I got no nearer my audience. Then ghastly thoughts suggested themselves. Was I really there, or was I at home in my bed, dreaming a bad dream from which I should presently awake? Or perhaps something had happened since I began—my audience had suddenly and quietly died, and I had been addressing dead men for the last twenty minutes. All were silent and motionless. Might not this be that last conspiracy of silence, the conspiracy of death? If so, someone would surely be dropping from his chair before long. Meanwhile I must go on. And now I was coming to the end of my lecture, and never did I wish for the end of anything more than I did then. An audience generally detects the beginning of the end. Whether it deserve to be called peroration or not, the speaker, like the Irish driver with

his lame horse, usually "reserves a trot for the avenue." My trot had scarcely begun when I noticed a curious change in the faces before me, an optical change, not a mental or emotional one, a kind of foreshortening of countenances, as though every one was leaning a little forward, and slightly stooping. And so indeed it was, for the moment the last word was off my lips the forward movement and the stoop were completed, every man seized his hat which he had placed under the chair before him, was on his feet, and making for the door. I have never seen a hall so soon emptied. It could not have been done more quickly if it had been agreed that the last man out should pay all expenses.

That evening took a good deal out of me.

Looking back upon my experience of lecturing as a whole, I do not regret the proportion of time and strength that I have given to it. It has enabled me to make some small contribution to intellectual life both within my own church and outside it; to suggest to many, especially young people, higher forms of recreation than they might otherwise have adopted, of pleasure more wholesome and satisfying than those that present themselves on every side. If it is true that "we live by admiration, hope, and love," it is important that the things we admire and love and hope for should be worthy of pursuit, and not mere gratifications of idle and aimless desires. We are yet in an early stage of our national education, as every one now admits. We have been slow to recognise the value of intellectual training even in its relation to practical efficiency in the business of life, and, what is perhaps still more important, to the enrichment of individual

character. In these respects there is great leeway to make up, to say nothing of the needful advance. Much of the religious life among us would also be stronger, saner, and more attractive if it were associated with cultivated intelligence and greater knowledge, as those who have to do with the working of the churches cannot fail to be aware. This is a large and many-sided subject, and I have no wish further to discuss it ; but I may express my conviction, founded on long experience, that next to the revival of religion in the fullest sense of that term, we need, in the interests of religion itself, a larger and more generous cultivation of the intellectual life of the people. However small the service I have been able to render in that direction, this is the belief in which I have worked, passing from the pulpit to the platform, and from the platform to the pulpit, as from one sphere of labour to another closely related to it.

From time to time during my residence in Birmingham, I visited the Continent, or, I should say, continued to do so, for the beginning of my continental travel dates from an earlier period. It was in the summer of 1865 that I first crossed the Channel, and spent ten days in Holland. It was a good beginning of the long series of visits I have since made to the chief centres of historic interest in Europe, its capitals, its ancient cities, its seats of learning and shrines of art. Every traveller who is free to choose where he will go is, I suppose, guided by the preferences to which his bent of mind inclines him. As for myself, I have no special powers as a pedestrian, and have never felt the fascination of climbing. I am not

an artist, a botanist, or a geologist, and am neither a hunter nor a fisherman. Skating, ski-ing, and tobogganing do not appeal to me, so that sports and studies which send so many to the mountains and the fiords have never been with me the motives of travel. The charm of scenery is in another category. I have felt it in almost its every key—the glory of the Alps, the beauty of the Italian lakes and of the Riviera, of the cliffs of Capri, and the thundering shore of Biarritz. The pleasure that I have received from these, and from the loveliness of earth and sky in a hundred other places, can never pass away from me. In many a quiet hour of these later years they still

Flash upon that inward eye
Which is the bliss of solitude.

But I have been drawn by a yet stronger attraction to scenes haunted by human memories, associated with great events in the history of mankind, with the struggles and achievements of past generations, with the fortunes of lost causes, and the new births of time. From the beginning of my own mental life the drama of the world's history has moved my imagination. I had early visions of the Rome of the Cæsars, of the Florence of the Medici, and the Venice of the Doges, of the Avignon of the Popes, and the Paris of the *Trois Mousquetaires* and of the Revolution. I delighted in poetry that called up such visions, and held them for a while before my mind's eye :

Athens, the eye of Greece, Mother of arts
And eloquence.

The mountains look on Marathon,
And Marathon looks on the sea.

I stood in Venice on the Bridge of Sighs
A palace and a prison on each hand.

From where Cortona lifts to heaven
Her diadem of towers.

O Tiber, Father Tiber,
To whom the Romans pray,
A Roman's life, a Roman's arms,
Thou hast in charge to-day.

Snatches of verse like these would rise in my memory, and I liked to repeat them aloud when there was no one to overhear. They gave me intense pleasure at the time, and were doing more than I knew to influence me in the future. They set me longing to travel in old lands, and to feel at first hand the inspiration to be found in ancient sites and venerable buildings, and in the traditions that linger round them. This desire was a boy's dream when first I felt it, but as time went on it increased and became more definite. I am glad that it was so, for I owe to it some of the best parts of my education—an education defective and inadequate, but, happily, still in process.

My visits to Paris have been more than fifty in number. I have gone to Paris for its own delightful sake; and because I must needs pass through it on my way to Switzerland, to Italy and to Spain; and again because in later years certain official duties took me there. My first visit was during the showy days of the Second Empire, when, to one like myself who could only

see the surface of things, all was not only splendid but prosperous and secure. What there was of weakness and of peril in the whole structure was soon to appear. Four years later I was in Paris after it had passed through the double ordeal of siege and capture by the Germans, and of the insurrection of the Commune. It was a city in mourning and in tears. The Tuileries, the Hôtel de Ville, the Palais Royal were ruins from which the smoke of their burning still rose. The streets bore the stains of recent fighting. The buildings in the Rue de Rivoli and adjoining neighbourhood were chipped and scarred by rifle fire, there was hardly a window unbroken, and the smell of burning petrol hung heavy in the air. At every railway station, not only in and around Paris, but throughout France—and I traversed it from Calais to Marseilles—German soldiers were on guard. All was unnaturally quiet. The gay, fierce, unquenchable spirit of France was for the time being stunned. I could not but recall the ancient dirge over the fall of Jerusalem :

How doth the city sit solitary that was full of people !
How is she become as a widow, she that was great among
the nations !

Princess among the provinces, how is she become tributary !

But the tears were soon dried. Not that France forgot—her memory is good—but she carried her unforgotten sorrow in her heart, to bequeath to her children and her children's children, and smiled again and lived on, hardest of workers, brightest of pleasure-takers, the most sentimental of the shrewd, and shrewdest of the sentimental peoples

of the earth. So have I seen her through all these years, and once again fighting for all she holds dear, not this time to lie at the proud foot of a conqueror.

But how much of France lies outside Paris ! More, much more, than the English visitor dreams of, more, perhaps, than Paris herself realises. The racial qualities of the west and the south, speech, temperament, local traditions, loyalties running strong and deep in their separate channels—all these are to be found in France knit together in her national life, “one and indivisible,” but in their variety full of interest and charm. Something of this I have known, though not so much as I could wish. But I have breathed the atmosphere of Amiens and Rouen, of Chartres and Rheims, have dreamed in their cathedrals and churches, and wandered through quaint old streets in which the life of the Middle Ages once flowed full tide and still seems to linger. In the amphitheatre and the Maison Carrée of Nîmes I have felt myself in a province of that Roman Empire whose laws and institutions underlie the vast fabric of modern civilisation, whose language still lives in half the tongues spoken in Europe to-day. At Avignon the memory of its Popes carries one far into the heart of the conflicts and schisms that disturb the papacy’s proud claim to unbroken unity. At Marseilles and along the Ligurian coast still older memories are called to mind—the Greeks, the Carthaginians, the Phœnicians, the legendary founders of cities now forgotten, the fathers of races that have vanished from the earth, lost amid unrecorded wars and migrations. The soil of France

is historic soil indeed. But what is more, notwithstanding the levelling forces at work during the last century, her people are not yet brought to that uniformity of type at which modern institutions seem to aim. There is picturesque diversity in her Bretons and Gascons, in her stolid Normans and fiery Marseillais, that enriches and beautifies her national life as a whole.

The English visitor to France lives usually in hotels. He sees nothing of French domestic life, and is apt to suppose there is none, and will even ask you triumphantly, what is the French for home? Whereas there are few countries in which the authority of parents is as great, or the conception of the family and its unity of interests so strong and influential, as in France. My own acquaintance with French family life has not been large, but it has been sufficient to show me something of its moral strength and social value. It is true that it has been confined to Protestant and more particularly to Methodist homes, and these, it may be said, are hardly typical of the country and of the people. However that may be, I have seen what the tourist as such never sees, the life within the doors of French families, and have many happy memories of home affections and loyalties. In no country does hotel life give you the key to a people's real character, in France as little as any other.

Of Italian domestic life I have seen little or nothing, unless that of English families long resident in the country may be so described. In the home of the Rev. Henry J. Piggott, of Rome, I have often been a privileged guest. The personal qualities

of my friend were of a rare and admirable kind. He was a scholar and a saint, a man of great natural refinement and charm of spirit and of manner. His life was devoted to Italy. For fifty-seven years, forty-five of which were spent in Rome, he was in the front rank of evangelical leaders, wise, patient, unwearied in the ministry of the gospel, in the oversight of churches, in the training of ministers, and in charitable and philanthropic labours. His personal influence among people of almost every class was unique, and was always exercised on behalf of what was kind and helpful. It is not too much to say that virtue went out from him, that he radiated a high and beautiful goodness that the most frivolous could not but feel, and the most cynical respect. In his knowledge of Italy and things Italian I doubt if he was surpassed by any Englishman of his time. He knew its history and literature, its modern developments and current problems, and followed the movements and tendencies of things around him with an interest that never flagged. I counted myself happy indeed to have him for my guide among the antiquities of Rome, among the Alban Hills, and the ancient memories of Tivoli and Tusculum. In his own home he was perhaps at his best, hospitable, genial, kindly, and as husband, father, and friend as near perfection as any man I have known.

Nor should I omit to pay a grateful tribute to the memory of the Rev. T. W. S. Jones, whom I have often visited in Naples, and from whom I received overflowing kindness. With great difference of gifts and of temperament, his position in

Naples was almost as remarkable as that of Mr. Piggott, in Rome. In that vast, crowded city he lived for nearly fifty years. In his earlier days he was eloquent, impassioned, and popular as a preacher ; perhaps towards the end of life there was some not unnatural diminution of these qualities. From first to last he was sympathetic to his environment. He understood the Neapolitan and his ways, and could meet him on his own ground. He became Italianised, or Italianated, to a degree that most Britons find impossible, was at home anywhere and everywhere in Southern Italy, could put up with all sorts of conditions, and get on with all kinds of people. I found him an invaluable companion in the journeys he was good enough to take with me. Together we ascended Vesuvius, and explored Pompeii and Herculaneum, made an enchanting visit to Capri, to Amalfi and Salerno, and the waste places and solemn temples of Paestum. But the crowning joy of our travels together was experienced in Sicily. Reaching Reggio by the railway, we crossed the Straits of Messina, and spent some ten days at Catania, Girgenti, Syracuse, and Palermo. No region that I have visited has appealed to me through more channels of thought and feeling. The climate, the scenery, the historic and legendary associations severally and together gave me pleasure beyond any that I have ever received from similar sources. We were on enchanted ground, haunted by memories of men and deeds that have been the theme of poets from the days of Homer, and of historians from those of Thucydides. Temples still stand there whose gods died long ago. The sun shines, and the light

falls, Etna smokes and flames, and the roses and myrtles bloom as they have done through Grecian, Roman, Saracen and Norman times ; but the ruins of many civilisations are on every side, ruins not now suggestive of violent overthrow, but peaceful and submissive to their fate, unmindful of the passer-by, though giving him thoughts that do often lie too deep for explanation and for utterance.

In our dealings with the people Mr. Jones was invaluable. Without him I should have been helpless in the hands of churlish peasants and crafty townfolk. But he knew them and their ways, laughed at them, slapped them on the back, gesticulated and harangued, spoke to them in parables, hinted that I was a near relation, or at least an intimate friend, of Queen Victoria, and showed them how desirable it was that I should be able to give a good account of them when next I saw her. Then they all laughed together, and the proposed charge for a carriage and horses shrank to modest dimensions, and we were friends, not to say brothers. In one instance our hotel bill was brought to us already receipted, so charmed was our host with Mr. Jones's genial ways. With difficulty I succeeded in forcing my share of it upon the reluctant landlord, who only consented to receive payment on the understanding that in all my future visits he should regard me as a member of his own family. Needless to say, my matter-of-fact English ways and imperfect command of Italian would not have awakened sentiments like these in the honest innkeeper. It was to Mr. Jones we owed them.

I must not begin to speak of Rome, or I shall outrun all reasonable limits. It may suffice to say that I have visited it some ten or twelve times with an increasing sense of its mysterious greatness as the chief centre on earth through many centuries of human action, the scene of events that have determined the destiny of nations and the general course of the world's history. Mythical and legendary Rome, republican Rome, the Rome of the Cæsars, of early Christianity, of the Popes, of the divided Empire, of the dim centuries that followed the Gothic invasions, mediæval Rome, the Rome of the Renaissance, Tridentine Rome, the Rome of the Vatican Council, and of Garibaldi, and Cavour, and Victor Emmanuel—all may be said to be still living in that mysterious unbroken life whose seat is on the Seven Hills, and the Forum, and the Tiber. All the periods of her history are represented in the ruins to be found there, or in buildings that still are standing. In the study of these the procession of the centuries can be traced. As to the geologist the strata of the earth beneath our feet tell the story of past upheavals and subsidences, of slow deposits and swift convulsive changes, so to the archæologist and the antiquary Rome's long history reveals itself in layer below layer of the work of her earlier and later builders, of successive generations that planted their temples, palaces, and porticoes on ruins that they found or made, at once burying the work of those who had gone before them, and ensuring the existence of at least fragments of it for the astonishment of those who should come after them. Nowhere so much as in Rome have I been thankful

for such knowledge as I have of Roman history and literature ; nowhere have I wished so earnestly that that knowledge was greater than it is.

Northern Italy being more easily accessible, I have visited it more frequently than Rome or Naples. Milan, Pisa, Bologna, and Venice, and the lakes that lie at the foot of the Alps, have been favourite places of resort, both for purposes of study and of recreation. They are well known to the tourist. Every one takes to them his own share of knowledge or of ignorance, of imagination or of the want of it, and brings away with him such impressions as his preparedness or unpreparedness enabled him to receive. I am far from claiming in any high degree the qualities and the equipment that enable one to profit by such opportunities of travel as I have enjoyed, but I think I am not mistaken in saying that I owe to them, not pleasure only, but mental quickening and expansion, together with widened human sympathies, and a deepened sense of the all-embracing wisdom and goodness of God, and of the mystery and pathos of human life.

In these references to my travels I have run beyond the period of my life at Handsworth, which came to an unexpected close under circumstances that I shall describe. My years of tutorship were happy, tranquil years, as I have already said, marked by few notable incidents, but in my inner, personal history, perhaps richer and more fruitful than those that preceded and followed them.

CHAPTER IX

1891-1899

Summoned to New York—Illness and Death of My Brother—Visit the Far West—Vancouver ; San Francisco ; Salt Lake City—Return Home to Find Myself Appointed Secretary to the Missionary Society—New Duties and Conditions of Life—My Work in France, Germany and Italy.

TOWARDS the end of May, 1891, I received a most affecting letter from my brother in New York. He told me that for some time he had been very unwell, that his ailment was now discovered to be incurable, and that he had not long to live. "My first thought," said he, "was that I would at once wind up my affairs here and come with my wife to England that I might see you all once more, die among my own people, and be laid by my father and mother. But my doctors tell me that I should not survive the voyage, but be buried in the Atlantic. So, if it is at all possible, come at once, my dear brother, and see me for the last time." I was, as may be supposed, greatly distressed, but immediately made the necessary arrangements and secured my passage.

My nephew, Mr. Rudyard Kipling, being at the time a good deal out of health, determined upon a voyage to New York and back, and we sailed together from Liverpool. With a view to maintaining his privacy and being spared the fatigue and excitement of company, he also registered under the name of Macdonald. In a few days,

however, his health and spirits were so far restored that he began to mingle with his fellow-passengers, and the qualities of his conversation led one and another of the more knowing to make a good guess at his personality. But both he and I, when questioned on the subject, to use the words of Tennyson, "smiled, and put the question by." We had scarcely reached our hotel in New York when the rumour that Mr. Kipling, under the name of Macdonald, had just landed brought down upon us the enterprising interviewer. He inquired for Mr. Macdonald, and I received him. Approaching me with a particularly intelligent smile, as of one who had got hold of the right end of a secret, he said, "Mr. Kipling, I believe." I told him he was mistaken; that my name was Macdonald. Finding him incredulous and persistent, I admitted that Mr. Kipling was with me, but was unwell, and had made up his mind not to receive callers or be interviewed by the press. To this I held in spite of all his blandishments, and he finally departed in sorrow and in anger. To the latter, I imagine, was due the statement in next morning's paper that Mr. Kipling had arrived in New York, but was a wreck in body and mind.

This little incident, however, was altogether overshadowed by the news that I had received before landing. A letter from my brother's wife was brought to me as we got alongside the quay telling me that my brother had died a day or two after I left Liverpool, and was buried two days before my arrival in New York. I was stunned by the news. My swift preparation and hurried

departure and rapid voyage were all in vain. My hope of seeing him once more and being with him to the end was suddenly broken. I learnt that he had received the cablegram that I had sent him before going on board, and after looking at the shipping list had said, he will be here on such and such a day. Then his illness took a fatal turn, he sank rapidly, and passed away. I need not say that my meeting with my sister-in-law was a very sorrowful one. She had much to say of the courage and patience with which he had borne his sufferings, and of his submission to God's will. My own grief was not to be measured by the amount of our intimacy during the later years. It had its roots in our early life, in our common parentage, and in memories and associations dear and sacred to us both.

After spending a few days with his widow, giving her all the assistance in my power, receiving meanwhile much kindness and sympathy from my brother's friends, it was necessary to rearrange my plans. I determined to take my sister-in-law back with me to England for a prolonged visit to the various members of our family. In the meantime she would need some few weeks in which to settle her affairs, and it seemed I could not spend them better than in travel through the western part of the continent, it being little likely that I should ever have the opportunity again.

I need not dwell in detail upon what proved to be a very interesting journey. I went west by the Canadian Pacific route, spending some days at Banff Springs, crossing the Rocky Mountains, and resting for a while at Vancouver. From

thence I worked my way to Portland (Oregon) and San Francisco. While in Portland, I had a striking illustration of the way in which the frontiers of civilisation had been pushed westward in the course of a single generation. A resident in the town, a man of about forty years of age, told me that when he was a boy he had come with his parents and a party of emigrants from one of the middle States to the Pacific coast. "We travelled," he said, "on foot, on horseback, in wagons. It took us eight months, and many of our company died on the way from fatigue and hardship, and in fights with the Indians." At the time he spoke the same journey could be made in four days, in safety, and with all the comforts that dining and sleeping cars can supply.

With San Francisco I was impressed but not delighted. A city not yet half a century old, it shared with the rest of the world all the latest developments of material civilisation—large and showy buildings, hotels, banks, theatres, street-cars, electric light, telephones, newspapers and the like, but seemed to me in danger of losing its soul, if it had not already lost it. As one candid informant told me, "Sunday has not got here yet. It has not crossed the Rockies." The things that Sunday stands for were certainly not much in evidence. I am not unacquainted with great cities, and do not expect to find them pious villages on a larger scale; but in San Francisco wickedness seemed to me to be unusually well-established, with little or no desire to conceal its existence, and with fewer checks and restraints from public opinion than I had met with elsewhere. I may

be wrong, but this was the impression I received. Human life appeared to be rather cheap, and the foundations of law and order inadequate and insecure. While I was there a particularly brutal murder took place in broad daylight, in the open street. Discussing the matter with a gentleman in the hotel, I ventured to express my hope that in this case the law would be properly vindicated. "Sir," said he gravely, "you can't get hanged in this country unless you've a good deal of influence with the Government."

I know that the real moral condition of a community cannot be understood at a glance, or judged solely from what lies on the surface. One ought to know in addition what counteracting and remedial forces are at work, and whether they are increasing or diminishing in efficiency. Of these things I was not in a position to form an opinion, but what I saw and heard in San Francisco led me to think that with all its beauty, wealth and enterprise, its higher life was in a bad way.

Among the conclusions to which I came while in the Far West were these: first, that if I were a young man, physically strong and seeking a field of enterprise, I should go to British Columbia; second, that if I were a capitalist, I should take my money to Vancouver; and third, that if I were seeking the most difficult sphere of Christian work under the sun, I should try San Francisco. These reflections, which, in my case, were far removed from any practical intentions, may be taken for what they are worth.

While in San Francisco I stayed at the Palace Hotel, a great and splendid establishment well

known both to residents and to travellers. People from all parts of the earth were usually to be found there. A curious fact connected with its residential staff took my attention. They were of various nationalities, and were appointed to their respective spheres of service, not, I take it, on racial grounds theoretically or scientifically considered, but for the practical reasons furnished by their qualities. The managers, clerks, cashiers, and bar-tenders were Americans ; the waiters in the restaurant were German, French or Swiss ; the porters who handled the baggage were negroes ; the attendants who glided along the corridors and from room to room polishing mirrors and cleaning furniture, curtains, etc., were Japanese or Chinese ; and the chambermaids were mostly Irish. The great hotel, with its complex, highly organised, smoothly working life, was what our seventeenth-century writers loved to call a microcosm, imaging the larger and still more varied life of the world around it, and by its adjustment of work to racial capacities and temperaments offering suggestions to those who cared to consider them. The great earthquake that all but shook San Francisco to pieces not very long after I was there, destroyed the Palace Hotel with the rest. But as Chicago was immediately rebuilt on a larger scale after its great fire, so has a new San Francisco risen on the same site, and I doubt not there is a Palace Hotel larger and more splendid than that in which I was a guest.

I had a sharp attack of illness while in San Francisco which confined me to my bed for several days. At such a time I realised the loneliness of

a stranger in a city of strangers. I had neither friend nor acquaintance nearer than New York, three thousand miles away. Once a day the doctor came to see me, and now and again a negro waiter on my floor would put his head into the room and say, "How you gettin' on, boss?" I had no other visitors. I tried to get a nurse, but without success. All that was possible was to hire as night-attendant an old coloured man, who was so deaf and was such an excellent sleeper that, when he had made himself comfortable for the night, it was hopeless to think of waking him. For his not very helpful companionship through the weary hours of the night I paid him two dollars and a half.

As soon as I was able to travel, though still suffering from neuritis, I set out on my return journey to New York, resting first at one place and then another, and slowly gathering strength. I took the Union Pacific route, considerably south of that by which I had travelled westward, and far less interesting as regards its scenery. A night that I spent at a little town on the Sierra Nevada, soon after leaving San Francisco, should have mention. It seemed to make such incidents as Bret Harte's stories describe quite credible. The hotel was the roughest in which I ever lodged, and after an indescribably repulsive dinner I went out for a stroll and a breath of fresh air. Seeing a brilliantly lighted wooden building from which the sound of music proceeded, I ventured to enter it. I found it was a gambling saloon, pretty well filled with men without coats, but wearing slouch hats and high boots, noisily engaged

in playing cards. I was on the point of withdrawing when I caught sight of something that held me there for a moment or two. On a table against the wall at one side of the room lay a dead man, covered with a sheet through which the outline of the body could be clearly seen. He had been killed in a squabble a few hours before, and when the first excitement had passed the presence of the corpse ceased to disturb the proceedings. The gamblers shouted and swore, the music, such as it was, went on, and the bar-tender was as busy as usual. It was a brief and lurid glimpse I had of a state of things once common enough in that region, and, as a newspaper that reported the proceedings at the inquiry subsequently held put it, without further comment, "The old pioneer epoch of the Pacific coast is not ended yet." But this was nearly thirty years ago. Let us hope it is ended now.

I made a halt of two or three days at Salt Lake City, the capital of Utah, the sacred city of Mormonism, that curious combination of fanaticism, shrewdness and sensuality that makes it perhaps the unloveliest of modern developments of religion. The city is a pleasant one, spaciouly planned and laid out, and has a prosperous, comfortable look, with its wide streets well planted, and made bright and wholesome by streams of running water. I visited its tabernacle, one of the biggest, and probably the ugliest building in the world. One marvellous property it had in its acoustic qualities, surpassing those of any whispering gallery on record. From one end of it to the other I heard a pin drop on the table, also the slow and gentle

tearing of a small piece of paper. The temple, which was to supersede it as the chief place of assembly for the Latterday Saints, was then in course of erection—vast, ambitious, costly, but destitute of anything like beauty or dignity to a degree I should have thought impossible. Of all the buildings on earth devoted to the uses of religion it promised to be the most vulgar, the least suggestive of the emotions and aspirations to which temples, churches and mosques have owed their origin.

As to the actual condition of Mormonism as a religion, or a social system, I could get little information. Those whom I questioned on the subject either did not know or did not care to speak freely. For one or two reasons I was inclined to think the latter was the case, so I did not press my inquiries.

I took the opportunity of visiting the Salt Lake from which the city has its name. It is about ten miles away, and its shore is a favourite place of resort. Its waters are, I believe, more heavily charged with saline matter than any waters in the world, including those of the Dead Sea. The people are very fond of bathing in them. A strong douche of fresh water is necessary after doing so in order to rid the body of the briny particles adhering to it. The lake is difficult to swim in as I found when, on having dived in head foremost, I had much ado, on returning to the surface, to keep my feet under me, as they showed an embarrassing tendency to come to the surface first. But for leisurely floating on one's back nothing could be better. This is the chief recreation

of those who flock to the lake on fine afternoons. Family parties may be seen amusing themselves on the surface of the water rather than in it, so slightly are they immersed. One domestic scene remains in my memory. The elderly father lay on his back reading a newspaper and smoking a cigar, while his wife lay by his side peacefully knitting, and their daughters floated about, lazily and luxuriously upborne by water that seemed almost solid in its power of support.

But all other incidents and experiences of my journey eastward were small matters compared with the shock of surprise that awaited me in Philadelphia. Casually taking up a newspaper there, among other paragraphs of news from England I came upon the statement that "a successor to the Rev. F. W. Macdonald in the chair of theology in Handsworth College had been appointed by the British Methodist Conference." I felt on reading it something like what I suppose a man would feel on reading the announcement of his own death, or, say, of the remarriage of his wife. "What has become of me?" was my first confused and troubled thought. "What have I done? Why have I been deposed, evicted, made to disappear in this fashion?" I read the words again and again, but they did not explain themselves, or add anything to the bald statement that had first met my eye. There it was, carrying no explanation. Neither did any suggest itself to me. I was up against a blank wall that I could neither see through nor get over.

I passed a wakeful night and several anxious days before the mystery began to clear. The

reply from a friend in England to a cablegram I sent him asking what it meant, gave me the first ray of light. Letters subsequently received explained the whole matter, and took from it the painful aspect it had hitherto borne, though the news they brought me was by no means welcome. It may be briefly stated. A vacancy had occurred in the secretariat of the Missionary Society, and some difficulty had been found in filling it. There were differences of opinion in the Conference which for a while kept the question open. Finally, I was fixed upon for the position. I was known to be in America, somewhere between the Atlantic and Pacific coasts, and that was all that was known. It was impossible to communicate with me ; the matter was pressing ; so the Conference, which has, in the last instance, plenary powers in disposing of those under its jurisdiction, appointed me missionary secretary in my absence, and without my knowledge.

I returned to England with my mind much occupied with this sudden and unexpected change in my position and outlook. I found much difficulty in reconciling myself to it. So far as my work, my immediate surroundings, and my plans for the future were concerned, to say nothing of personal and family interests, I was well rooted at Handsworth, and the sudden uprooting was painful to me. My tutorial life, its happy association with my students and favourable conditions for studies of my own, its freedom from administrative responsibilities and cares, with just enough of public duties to check any tendency to undue seclusion and bookishness, were all much

to my mind. To exchange them, as it were at a moment's notice, for duties to which I was unaccustomed, and in regard to which I had misgivings concerning my competence, could not but disturb me greatly, and in spite of the joy of finding myself at home again, I arrived there with a heavy heart.

In September, 1891, I bade a reluctant farewell to theological studies and teaching, and removed to London to take my place on the secretarial staff of the Wesleyan Missionary Society. Under the conditions of my office I had to find a home for myself and family, instead of, as heretofore, taking possession of one already provided. I was free to choose my place of residence and to furnish a house in accordance with my own taste and my means of gratifying it. As these were matters that would require time, I took for the time being a furnished house at Beckenham, and gave myself to the "pleasing, anxious" task of house-hunting. Some old associations drew me to the neighbourhood of Streatham Hill, where I and my family were to make our home for twenty-six years, by far the longest period of continuous residence that I have enjoyed in what has been a somewhat wandering life. There my boys and girls were to grow into men and women, and there my wife and I were to grow old together until the time came when she was taken from me.

It is not my intention to write in detail my history as a missionary secretary, though something must needs be said of this the last of the three periods into which my active ministry has been divided. The society that I was now called

to serve is, as is well known, one of the principal British societies engaged in world-evangelisation. Its operations are on a large scale in Asia, Africa, and the West Indies, and on a smaller scale in France, in Italy, and in Spain. It employs almost all the agencies and methods which the united experience of the churches has developed during the last century and a quarter. They include evangelistic and pastoral duty, European and native ; educational work, from that of the village school to the high school and university ; medical missions, with hospitals, dispensaries, leper homes and institutions for the blind, orphanages, and industrial homes ; and the production and diffusion of Christian literature in many languages. It has in its service a great body of missionary workers, British and native, ministerial and lay, men and women, representing almost every kind of gift and qualification, and, in many instances, a notable life-history. It is, and has been, the society's policy to allow large scope to individual action on the part of its agents, and at the same time to maintain an effective organised system, at once to guard against the evils of loose and ill-concerted action, and so to direct the activities of the various classes of workers as to make them contributory to the success of the work as a whole.

The missionary committee in London is the central governing body controlling the entire field of operations with an authority immediately derived from the Conference, and exercised on its behalf. To this authority all questions of general policy, of administration discipline and finance are ultimately referred. It is responsible for raising

an annual income approaching £200,000, and for its apportionment to the various agencies under its direction. I would leave others to judge of the labour this involves, of the careful organisation it entails, and of the vast number of helpers required throughout the country to secure such an income, contributed for the most part in small sums.

But there is other and higher duty devolving upon those to whom the management of the society is committed, a spiritual trust of primary importance. The missionary committee is, as it were, the embodied conscience of the church so far as missionary work is concerned. It is for it to foster and strengthen the missionary spirit throughout the community it represents, to give stimulus to the zeal and piety of ministers and people and focus them upon our Lord's great Commission, at the same time calling out and bringing into co-operation the latent sympathies, the undeveloped faith and love that are widely diffused. The committee, composed largely of experts, and, for the rest, of those who take a deep interest in the extension of Christ's Kingdom on the earth, is able through many channels and in many ways to reach the heart of the church, and to that heart it must present its case, explain it, and press it home. Only so far as the convictions of Christian people are secured on its behalf, can missionary work be effectively carried on. No lower or lesser inspiration will suffice. No amount of energy or administrative ability will keep a missionary society "in being" apart from that which Christian faith and devotion can alone supply. The wheels will drag, the machinery move more and more heavily

even under the hands of the most skilful engineers, unless in and through the organisation there runs a ceaseless vital current, a steady stream of spiritual life finding expression in sacrifice and service. To promote this spirit in the churches and direct it to the great ends in view, stands first among the duties of the governing body of a missionary society.

Like my colleagues and predecessors in office, I have spent much of my time and strength in missionary advocacy, addressing meetings year by year in all parts of the country. A missionary meeting may be one of the best, most uplifting and fruitful in result of all the church meetings of the year ; or it may be one of the dulllest and least profitable. I have had experience of both kinds. Where there is nothing in the spirit of the hearers to help the speaker, and nothing in the speaker to move the hearers, what can be expected but a perfunctory and profitless hour ? On the other hand, there are congregations in which the missionary spirit is so much alive that it readily responds to appeal, and there are speakers in such possession of the subject, both in its central principles and its practical details, that they can present it with great power and effectiveness. Where these conditions are realised, I know of no kind of meeting that can minister more directly to the spiritual life of the church, and so to the extension of the Kingdom of God. And I would add that in my judgment there has been great improvement in this respect within my own memory. The showy, oratorical speech is a greater rarity than it used to be. And so is the trifling speech, with its petty anecdotes and platform facetiousness. Speaking

generally, there is more simplicity and directness, more appeal to the highest motives in missionary speeches than once prevailed, indicating a clearer vision and a stronger grasp of the subject, and of the great problems of the world's life. To myself the advocacy of the missionary cause has for more than fifty years brought continual renewal of spiritual strength, and has, I believe, given to that strength much of its best employment.

For administrative purposes a definite portion of the mission field is assigned to each of the three or four general secretaries as the object of his special care. He is expected to make himself acquainted with its character and conditions, to study its interests, and to represent them in counsel with his colleagues and in the general committee. He carries on the correspondence with the synods and officials of the sphere entrusted to him, and all inquiries, suggestions or complaints, official or private, connected with it are considered first by him. In these respects there may be some change of method since my time, but I speak of things as they then were.

The sphere assigned to me was that of our Continental missions, an arrangement entirely to my mind, and I entered on my duties with zest.

Our little church in France had a *quasi* independent existence, with a Conference of its own, but affiliated to the British Conference, and subsidised, and in other ways assisted, by the Missionary Society. It has never been a numerous church, nor has it shown any great power of extension. But as I came into close association with it, and with the admirable body of men its ministers,

they won not only my esteem but my affection. In no part of the world have I met with Methodist ministers more faithful and painstaking, of higher personal character, or of greater cheerfulness and patience under difficult conditions. In the presence of widely prevailing hostility to religious faith of any kind, of the strong, traditionary hold of the Roman Catholic Church upon even its nominal adherents, and of the unaggressive temperament of French Protestantism, there has been little sympathy in France with religion of an evangelical and missionary type, or with any effort for the awakening and conversion of the irreligious masses. Methodism in France has known nothing of mass movements, or of popularity with the people such as it has known in this and other countries. Its congregations are small, its converts have been gathered one by one, and its pious families are islanded, as it were, amid a population that is unsympathetic and sometimes openly hostile. Perhaps the largest and most lasting influence of French Methodism will be found in the Église Réformée, to which, as is freely acknowledged, it has been a source of spiritual quickening. Many of the most useful ministers of that church owe to it the evangelical zeal which was the one thing wanting in their equipment. Whether it will be possible to bring about some kind of union between Methodism in France and the historic national Protestantism of that country remains to be seen. A few years ago it would have appeared impossible, but—*Tempora mutantur, nos et mutamur in illis*—Who shall say what is impossible to-day, or to-morrow?

For some years after entering upon my duties I had charge of our missions in Germany. These were confined to Würtemberg and Bavaria, with Cannstadt, near Stuttgart, as their administrative centre. The Rev. J. C. Barratt, the wise and faithful chairman of the district, resided there, the only Englishman in the work, all the other ministers being Germans. I found them intelligent and capable men, but owing to my very slight command of the language, I never got as near to them as I did to the French, and even the Italian ministers. My visits were made very pleasant to me by the kindness of Mr. Barratt and his family, who acted as interpreters, and placed at my disposal their intimate knowledge of German people and things.

While discharging my duties as well as I could in the rather difficult circumstances, a question of great importance gradually presented itself as one that must be seriously considered. In addition to our own organisation, there were also Methodist churches in various parts of the land connected with the Methodist Episcopal Church of America. There were no doctrinal differences between them and us, and no dissension or ill-feeling of any kind, and I could not but ask myself why the two communities should not become one, a question which I found was also being asked by many of those most immediately concerned. And if they were to become one, it became apparent on consideration that it must be by our churches joining the American organisation. In the first place, it was the larger body, and more widely established; moreover, the feeling in our church was moving in

that direction. It was not a case of anti-English sentiment, such as has subsequently become so intense ; but the emigration from Germany to the United States had for a generation or two been creating links between America and the families of the industrial and peasant classes in Germany, a fact of considerable importance in the social life of the two countries. I had met with German-speaking Methodist ministers and congregations in America, but I had not realised the amount of their intercourse with their kinsfolk in Germany, and still less the extent to which it would interest their people at home in the American, rather than the British, type of Methodism naturalised in their midst. The more closely, however, I looked into the matter the more apparent this became. The question of consolidation in a single church was fully discussed between the two bodies of Methodists in Germany, in our own synod, and in the missionary committee in London. There were difficulties in the way, of course. The union or confederation of churches, when it comes to practical details, is no easy matter. In this case the financial difficulties, which at one time seemed formidable, were happily removed by the munificence of the Baroness Langenau, who had set her heart upon the unification of the two hitherto separate bodies of Methodists. The scheme as agreed upon was finally carried out without dissension or friction of any kind. The ministers connected with our church were received into the ministry of the Methodist Episcopal Church in Germany, and the church buildings belonging to the English Missionary Society were legally transferred to it.

The Baroness Langenau was a lady of striking personality, the widow of an Austrian statesman who had formerly been Ambassador at the Court of Russia. She had seen much of the world, was well known in the highest circles, and greatly respected for her intelligence and fine personal qualities. She had passed through a long period of dissatisfaction and unrest with regard to her religious faith, failing to find what she sought either amongst Roman Catholics or Lutherans. Coming at length into contact, I do not know how or where, with members of our church in Germany, she came to share their evangelical faith and simple worship, and cast in her lot with them, the only person of any social distinction in a small and obscure community. Here she found at once a religious atmosphere in which she was happy to live, and a sphere of service in which she could be of use. Her experience of life, her cultivated mind and clear judgment, combined with a simple faith, made her an invaluable friend and counsellor to the little body of Christian people with whom she was henceforth associated, and her liberality was constant and ungrudging. When the time came for discussing the transfer of our church property to the Methodist Episcopal Church, she practically presented it to that body at her own cost, reimbursing the missionary committee for its expenditure upon it.

The Baroness resided in Vienna, where I visited her two or three times during my term of office. It was owing to her generosity that we came to have a church and minister's residence in Vienna, our only station in Austria. There was, indeed,

little opportunity for extension of our work in that country. In Germany, so far as I am aware, there had been little interference with us on the part of the authorities, who, however, kept their eye upon us and were well acquainted with our affairs, as was to be expected in a land where every element of the people's life is under constant observation and control. But in Austria there was, in addition to an ever-present police supervision of everybody and everything, an abiding hostility to any religious movement that was not in official relation with the State and the recognised ecclesiastical authorities. In the earlier years of our mission in Vienna our little congregation, meeting only in private houses, was driven from one part of the city to another, and harassed in various ways. In 1890 the generosity of the Baroness provided for the mission a suitable place of meeting, together with an apartment for a resident minister. This, it appears, was too much, and after a short period during which the police appeared again and again at the meetings, they were suppressed, and the minister prohibited from holding services. It was in these trying circumstances that I made my first visit to Vienna with a view to acquiring information on the spot, and obtaining, if it were possible, some relaxation of the harsh restrictions imposed.

I was aware that I could not receive official assistance from the British Embassy, but, furnished with a letter of introduction from the Foreign Office, I secured the kind assistance of the Honourable W. Barrington, the *Chargé d'Affaires*, and through him an interview with the Chief Secretary of

Public Worship. I represented to him at some length the difficulty of our position, the right of private worship having been withdrawn, and that of public worship not being granted. He informed me with the utmost politeness that our Articles of Faith were of a character to be offensive to the recognised churches of the country. After some explanation as to the so-called Articles of Faith, I asked that the modest privileges we enjoyed before, and which were then possessed by certain communities not officially recognised, might be restored to us. To this he replied, "We never give *consent* to private worship, we *tolerate* it. But if complaints against it are urged by legally constituted bodies, we are obliged to proceed against it."

"Can you not give me some assurance," I said, "that if we resume our meetings for private worship we shall not be disturbed by the police?" "I can assure you of nothing, except that we regard you with *bienveillance*." I ventured to tell him that we had no desire to agitate the question in England, but there was no subject on which Englishmen were more jealous than that of the primary rights of conscience and of religious belief; that the press at home had already commented on the matter; and that if it still remained the case that while we enjoyed freedom of worship in Germany, France, and Italy, it was denied to us in Austria, disagreeable things might very possibly be written and said. And at this we left it.

Looking back upon the whole conversation, I find nothing to complain of in the chief secretary's language to me, taking into account the law and

spirit of things then existing in Austria. Austrian and English minds approach the question of religious liberty from such different points of view that they are not likely to come to a common understanding. The law in Austria prescribes minute and rigorous conditions on which alone it will grant official recognition to religious bodies ; on the other hand, the tolerance it gives to non-recognised communities is wholly uncertain. In practice it may give almost all the freedom that is desired, or may withhold it altogether. My last reflection on the subject is—the irony of it all ; that while there are deep and dangerous evils in the life of nations, always threatening their moral vitality and social development, Governments should ever think it worth their while to oppress or discourage the humblest forms of piety, shutting down, as far as it is in their power to do so, all aspirations towards God and spiritual things that do not move in prescribed channels and possess official sanction. Every country can, as I once heard an American express it, “stand a good deal of bad government.” But it cannot stand it for ever ; and sooner or later the day of reckoning comes.

Of Italy I have already spoken, but may add a few lines. One feature of our ministry there impressed me from the first. I think I am right in saying that every man in it was of Roman Catholic birth and upbringing. Several of them had been priests, and had a history full of interest, in some instances of romance and adventure. The Roman Catholic authorities would have us believe that none but “bad priests” ever break

away from the church. But it is not so. During the last thirty years there has been a considerable exodus of priests from the Roman Communion, due, not to the breakdown of character, but to its awakening and quickening. And this has been more marked among members of the religious orders than among parish priests. The influence of monastic life upon the average man is to subdue him to its prevailing tone and spirit, to reduce individuality to its lowest and impress its type on his mental and moral nature. In the ideal monastic life this formation of a common type in those who share it may be on the whole an advantage, lifting ordinary men to a higher level than they would otherwise have attained, though even then there is risk. But when such life is by no means ideal, but is a matter of routine, dull and petty, unintelligent and unspiritual, there is always the likelihood of revolt among the stronger and more restless spirits. A monk's revolt is not usually in the first place against the formal doctrine of his church. That, as we know, often comes later. But in its beginning it is generally directed against practical abuses, and against a narrow and unsympathetic order of things that has no place in it for the questionings and aspirations that arise from time to time in the minds of most men, and with all but irresistible force in the minds of some. By the very theory of its existence a monastery, a spiritual fraternity, should be a place for the high development of the spiritual life, and I have little doubt that in many instances it has been ; but where spiritual life is at its lowest, the atmosphere heavy with ignorance, the admin-

istration selfish, and the whole round of life wanting in inspiration and high motive, there are those who will revolt if opportunity affords. Such opportunity revolutions and political changes have brought about in Italy as in France, and in both countries there are many "ex-monks." Some of these have doubtless been moved by nothing more than the natural man's desire for freedom and social life; others have left the monastery to find rest for their souls, and to give themselves henceforth to the service of Christ in the world rather than in the cloister and the cell. And of these a considerable number have found a home and a sphere of service in the Italian Methodist Church. Some day, I hope, the story of their lives will be adequately told, as it might have been if the late Mr. Piggott's time and strength had allowed.

My visits to France and Italy during my years of office, though not without their anxieties and cares, were a great source of pleasure to me. By a little arrangement of matters beforehand I was often able to give myself time to linger on my journeys, or to diverge from my direct course to scenes of interest that lay outside it. So I have drifted slowly along the Riviera on my way from Italy, and visited my old friend, the venerable William Arthur, at Cannes, and spent a day with George Macdonald, the poet and novelist, at Bordighera. From Padua, whither sundry duties had taken me, it was easy to go to Venice. Similarly, after attending the French conference at Nîmes, I sought rest and quiet at Avignon.

In the older towns I had opportunities of book-hunting which nothing short of absolute impe-

cuniosity would have induced me to neglect. Of this my shelves still bear witness in many a curious old volume picked up in Rome and Naples, in Florence and Milan and Venice. I have been much drawn to the early history of printing, and to those first masters of the craft, learned and large-hearted men, to whom scholarship, literature, and our higher civilisation generally owe so much, and have secured specimens from the presses of many of them. The first Aldus and his successors of Venice, the Etiennes of Paris, Froben of Basle, Plantin of Antwerp, the Elzevirs of Leyden and Amsterdam, and others—with what pleasure do I handle volumes that they set up and corrected and sent out upon their mission centuries ago! Modern literature may be trusted to take care of itself. It catches our eye and has our ear daily; it meets us in our every path; it has a vast organisation at its service to compel our attention. New books are advertised, are reviewed, are talked of, all of which is right enough. But it is not so with old books. They are for those who seek them, and will be at pains to come at them. The pleasure they can give lies not on the surface, and is perhaps only felt by few. Some kind of prenticeship seems necessary—and for this there should be a preparation in the temperament—before one can be made happy by an Aldine “*Prudentius*,” or an Elzevir “*Imitatio Christi*,” or by the exquisite typography of Simon de Colines; but the pleasure, once realised, is an addition to one’s resources not to be measured by a utilitarian standard. Of these things, however, I have written enough elsewhere.

I held the office of missionary secretary for fourteen years. It was a position that I should hardly have chosen for myself, but I have already described the circumstances that led to my appointment. By temperament and the mental habits formed in quite another sphere, I was not perhaps well adapted for the office-work which was to form a considerable part of my duty, happily varied by the claims of the pulpit and the platform, and by my journeys to the Continent. But at the heart of things, where the real meaning and motives of the society's existence lay, I found constant inspiration. The cause for which I laboured was greater than all the means and agencies employed in its service, and it never grew stale or commonplace to me. There are aims that "make drudgery divine," and if they are not to be found in the missionary service of the Church of Christ, I know not where to look for them. To keep these aims well in view, to restate them to one's self from time to time, and get fresh vision of their sanctity and spiritual worth, is the best protection I know of against the weariness which official life is sometimes apt to beget.

Happily also for me mine was a joint secretaryship, and in my colleagues I found invaluable companionship. I might describe the spirit in which we worked together in two phrases, the one Biblical—We bore one another's burdens; the other modern—We pooled our resources. Each of us had, I think I may say, some gifts or qualities that the others did not possess, or possess in equal measure; but if we had them among us, that was enough. They were at each other's disposal and

at that of the cause we served in common, and I was not the least to benefit by this happy arrangement.

Such association continued for years together naturally leads to great intimacy, and, given congenial minds, to close-knit friendships. I gather that it is so in political life, and in the more highly organised public services. Certainly it was so in the sphere in which I worked. Though there were degrees in the friendships there formed, I had no colleague during the time I was at the mission house whom I could not call my friend. Most of them are, at the time I write, still living. The Rev. Marshall Hartley, whom "time does not wither," is still at his post. The Revds. William Perkins and J. Milton Brown are enjoying well-earned retirement. Dr. Barber has been for some years head master of the Leys School, and W. H. Findlay is doing important missionary work in India—*Valeant et Floreant!*

When I first joined the staff the Rev. G. W. Olver was its senior member. He was a man not easily known, but well worth the knowing. He was naturally reserved, cautious in forming a judgment, and still more cautious in expressing it. His early experience as a schoolmaster had perhaps left its mark both on his cast of mind and on his manner. His habitual seriousness did not easily relax, and his sense of humour needed much invocation before it awoke. But his fidelity to every trust and obligation was unfailing. He was not contentious or masterful with regard to his own views as such, but he would take any pains or make any sacrifice where truth and justice

were concerned. Here, if need was, he could be stern, though his sternness, as I came to understand it, was rather exercised upon himself than turned upon others, and was an aspect of the self-discipline that was characteristic. And underneath the uncompromising qualities that all recognised were others, also uncompromising, known only to those who really knew him—tenderness of heart towards all that was pathetic in human life, and a faith in God as simple as that of a child. He retired from active work in 1900, and died not long after.

To be at the mission house was to be at the centre of our church's constitutional life. Until recent years other departments beside that of foreign missions had their headquarters within its walls, and their principal officers were to be found there. It was the meeting-place of the committees that brought together the most influential men in Methodism, both ministers and laymen, and practically the council chamber where all matters touching the interests of the Connexion were reported and discussed. Those of us whose daily duties took us there, and others who came less frequently, were brought into very close association, and looking back upon it all I see in the intimacies so formed, and the mutual understanding to which it led, one of the sources of strength to our community as a whole. From time to time criticism of "the officials" of Methodism as a class has found expression in the Conference and elsewhere, but allowing for the imperfection attending all forms of human administration, it is generally admitted that she has for the most part been well

served by those to whom she has committed the management of her affairs. The system is democratic, all appointments to office being made by the Conference, itself a large and liberally constituted body, and no appointment is for life, but only for periods of time terminable by the same broad-based authority. One reflection, the result of long observation of the working of our system, it may not be inappropriate to offer. It might be thought that the system of committees as governing or directing bodies would leave little room for individual influence, substituting for it the general view or common agreement finally arrived at by many minds. But only to a small extent is that the case. In most of the committees with which I have had to do the majority of those present have had no very strong grasp of the business on hand. They have not studied it beforehand, or considered the bearing of related questions, or made themselves familiar with details which are often all-important. But the official, generally the secretary, has done these things. He sees his way through them. He has usually thought them out, and presents them to the committee along the line of policy he is prepared to recommend. This is a relief to the twenty or thirty members of committee necessarily less acquainted with the matter in hand, and not unwilling to be guided. Moreover, the secretary has presumably been selected for his office on account of his capacity for dealing with the matters involved. Save in exceptional cases, therefore, or in small and unimportant matters, they vote as he intends they should vote. So far from the individual counting

for little under the committee system, there is perhaps no sphere where he counts for more, if to reasonable ability and good sense he adds knowledge of the business with which he has to deal. Again and again I have seen large committees dominated, guided, brought to their decisions by one controlling mind. Ours may be the age of organisation, but organisation, whether in Church or State, in trade unions or shareholders' meetings, would seem rather to give increased power to the individual than to diminish it. By way of illustration I would refer to the way in which, during my own recollection, the great governing committees in Methodism have borne the impress of such master-minds as those of Mr. Bedford, Dr. Osborn, and Dr. Rigg, of James Ernest Clapham, and Dr. Henry J. Pope. And illustrations as pertinent might perhaps be found to-day.

The mission house had not only its regular staff there installed, and its familiar and frequent visitors, but a succession of callers of the most miscellaneous kind, eccentric people on all sorts of quests. People with a newly discovered remedy for all human ills would come and offer it to us. Now it was a short and easy method of dealing with popery, then a scheme for raising vast sums of money for beneficent purposes, or a formula that would bring about the unification of Christendom, or a plan for the abolition of disease that would be pressed upon us. Strange inquirers would come with questions concerning the millennium, or the lost tribes, or the true meaning of the pyramids. One day I had a call from a young German who wished us to engage him as a missionary

to Africa that he might study its botany. He explained in broken English that he was a good chemist, and a geologist, and he added, "My friends say that I have a genius for religion." Another caller would, in spite of my protests, tell me all about his domestic troubles, the chief of which was that his wife did not sympathise with his religious aspirations. In the circumstances he thought he was entitled to a divorce, and could I advise him as to the best means of obtaining one? I declined to give him any advice at all, or discuss the subject with him. "Is that your answer to me?" he said. "It is," I replied. At first he was angry, but after a moment or two he said, "Well, perhaps that is the answer I was to receive from you." "No doubt of it," said I, as I showed him to the door. On another occasion a man found his way to my room unannounced and poured out a confused account of the persecution he was suffering from his relations. "They actually accuse me," he said, "of attempting to commit suicide! It's all nonsense, you know, though of course one day I did cut my neck a bit with my razor, but that was nothing." He got very much excited as he spoke, left his seat, and kept edging unpleasantly nearer to me. I began to think I had a madman on my hands, and kept my eye watchfully upon him. While doing so I noticed that my faithful clerk had risen from his stool, and with a heavy ruler in his hand had crept quietly behind him and was waiting for further developments. Things passed off, however, without any dramatic incident. I calmed my excited visitor with assurances of sympathy,

got him out of the room, and finally sent him away to lay his grievances before someone else.

But such visitors were not many—only one now and again, thrown up, as it were, from the sea whose tide flowed past our doors, tides that carry with them lives marred and broken amid the shocks to which our human nature is exposed. The people that passed in and out of our doors were for the most part of the world's best, good men and women, busy on unselfish tasks, helpers of others, servants of the philanthropy that came into the world with Jesus Christ, and still draws its strength from His teaching and example. To be associated with these in counsel and in practical work was a privilege appreciated at the time, and thankfully remembered now.

CHAPTER X

1899-1900

President of the Conference—My Inaugural Address—Some Incidents of the Year—Presidents and Ex-Presidents—The United Free Church of Scotland.

AT the Conference of 1899, which met in Wesley's Chapel, City Road, London, I was elected president. My two immediate predecessors in office were the Rev. W. L. Watkinson, in 1897, and the Rev. Hugh Price Hughes, in 1898; both men in the very forefront of our ministry. With Mr. Watkinson I had long enjoyed an intimate and happy friendship. We have not had among us in my time a man of more remarkable gifts, a personality more striking and original. He is before all things a preacher, and all his qualities find expression in his sermons. In addition to their immediate influence, they have had wide currency in their published form. I have met with them, particularly, on the shelves of ministers so far afield as America and Canada, Australia and New Zealand. The structure of his mind is essentially philosophic, and his powers of analysis are equalled by the skill with which he presents its results and fastens them on the minds of his hearers. And his philosophy is not "dull and crabbed," for his sense of humour is inborn and unextinguishable, sometimes playing beneath the surface of his thought, at others condensed into a lightning stroke of irresistible directness and force. It is

never very far away even when he is most serious, and now and then gives unexpected illumination in unlikely places. Possibly the touch, the flash of humour is occasionally too ready to perform its useful office, and some of his hearers may set too much value upon it for its own sake ; but, speaking generally, it serves to carry home to those whom a severe and unilluminated line of thought would leave unmoved, truths which it is well they should understand. His power of illustration is, in my judgment, unsurpassed by that of any preacher or public speaker that I know. He draws in the most felicitous manner upon his wide and varied reading, literary and scientific, and from quaint and unexplored realms of human experience. Other men may have command of equal resources in these respects, but the point of view, the angle of vision, the perception of subtle correspondences and contradictions—these, and the use he makes of them, are his own. The sense of humour to which I have referred is one of the organs of his intellectual nature, and is quick to perceive many aspects of things that are hidden from the wise and prudent, unless they too have the gift in some degree.

Mr. Watkinson and I are, at the time I write, the senior ex-presidents of the Conference, survivors of most of our generation, and as our friendship was a joy and a strength to us in past years, so in these our later days it is a source of quiet happiness to us both.

Mr. Hughes, at the time he succeeded to the chair of the Conference, was in the fullness of his strength, and at the height of his reputation and

influence. He was generally regarded as the foremost man in Methodism, the ablest, most energetic and impassioned leading spirit it had produced within living memory. He had indeed many of the qualities of a great leader. He was enthusiastic and could rouse enthusiasm in others. He had visions of great things, and believed in the possibility of realising them. Though not exactly eloquent, he had amazing powers of ready and effective speech, and in debate was exceedingly nimble and resourceful. His mind moved very swiftly when set in motion, and was fertile in improvising arguments, illustrations, appeals and protests that followed each other with amazing force. But the inner driving power of his whole strenuous career was devotion to Christ and His cause. Of this none who knew him doubted. His all too early death in 1902 was a loss to Methodism that can hardly be measured, not only for what he was, but for what might have been expected from him in the ripeness of his age and experience.

In accordance with our established procedure it fell to Mr. Hughes as retiring President to induct me into office. This he did in a speech of generous appreciation, and of good wishes for my success in the position to which I was now called.

It is the custom for the newly elected President, if not exactly to "read himself in," to deliver an inaugural address. Few utterances pass more certainly into oblivion than such addresses, however well they may serve the occasion of their delivery. Mine is now before me, and is no exception to the rule. But in writing this review of my life, and

of the convictions and ideals by which it has been shaped, I will venture to quote from it words in which some of my beliefs and aims were then expressed, and which I should not greatly alter if I were to speak of them to-day.

A Personal Note.—"The President of the Conference is the chief official in an extremely complex system, an order of things in which the light of nature will not carry him very far, but where law, custom and procedure must be considered at every step. In respect of these matters I am afraid the longest apprenticeship would never make me really proficient. I admit I have had ample opportunity for attaining that proficiency, but opportunity is for those who can profit by it, and I fear that with it all I bring to this office natural incapacity of a high order. I shall have to rely in an unusual degree on the assistance of those counsellors around the chair to whom the wisest occupant of it is at times glad to turn.

"With regard to other and deeper reasons for shrinking from this office, it would not perhaps be becoming to say much, but I feel that it would be still less becoming were I to say nothing. Only one who is filled with self-complacency can stand where I stand without feeling humbled. The memories that gather round this chair appeal to me with almost oppressive weight. The judgment of fitness to occupy it which you have given by your vote is challenged from within, and I cannot get such a vote there as you in your kindness have given me. When I think of the duties and responsibilities of the office, of the influence it carries with it, of the expectations it awakens,

of the reverence with which it is regarded by vast numbers of Christian people throughout the world, the sense of personal gratification is overshadowed by graver considerations. I do most earnestly ask the help and blessing of Almighty God ; and of you, who have put this honour and burden upon me, I ask that you would help together in prayer for me, that the gift bestowed on me by your prayers may through me be given back in blessing to many."

The Domestic Annals of Methodism.—"The general course of our church's history is well known, but the domestic annals which that history includes are, from the nature of the case, private memories and possessions. It has been said that the political history of this country might almost be written from the letters and journals of its great political families. Something like it is true of Methodism. Much of its history is interpreted when we read the correspondence of our fathers, and are enabled to see the humble round of life and duty of which the Methodist preacher's home was the centre. I have had this privilege in an exceptional degree in traditions of more than a century. The simple records that I possess, letters written to near relations and diaries intended for no eye but the writer's, afford 'side-lights of Methodism' more edifying than the controversies whose echoes reach us still ; plain living and high thinking, family life just above the level of actual poverty, but bright with affection and intelligence, sweet and gracious in its simple piety, serious in its aims but touched with imagination and humour. It has been given to some of my grandfather's descendants to achieve

distinction that is widely recognised ; but the moral picturesque of that brave old Methodist preacher's life, his courage and cheerfulness, his manly piety, his love of his children and of his books, and of the people among whom he laboured—the memory of these will still remain a principal part of the inheritance of those who claim descent from him. In thinking of these things I have often felt that but a small part of the church's life is represented by our conferences and congresses, by organisations and demonstrations visible to every observer. That which is true of the Kingdom of God as a whole, that it 'comes not with observation,' that it is seed which 'grows we know not how,' is true of that kingdom in detail. Perhaps more than most churches we are able to see our work and count our gains as we go on, but how much more there is that cannot be seen ! I am not disparaging our statistical methods when I remind myself that no statistics can show us the silent life of God among our people, the inner discipline and ripening of character, and the guidance of that kindly light by which families and individual lives are led by ways which they know not until the will of God concerning them is accomplished."

Relations with Other Churches.—"Our church system seems to me to hold in happy balance different elements of polity on whose equilibrium stability depends. The theory and position of the ministry among us are as far removed from sacerdotalism as from anarchy, and we have no intention of going further in the direction of Rome on the one hand, or of Plymouth on the other.

Our laity are neither the slaves nor the taskmasters of their ministers, but their brethren and fellow-labourers. As to our relations with other churches, they were never more cordial or fruitful than they now are. So far as the Nonconformist churches are concerned, there are no grudges or grievances between us, no differences that hinder co-operation of the happiest kind. With regard to the Church of England, the relation is not so clear or so easily summed up, but I by no means take a despondent view of it. It is true we regret many of the developments that have marked recent years, both in a sacerdotal and in a rationalistic direction. We shall meet them, not by controversy, which embitters and seldom persuades, but by working out our own convictions as witnesses for an Evangelical theology and church life. Meanwhile, we see much to admire in the zeal and industry of her clergy, and much to imitate in the piety of many of her children. We honour her scholars, love her missionaries, and count many of her people amongst our dearest friends. And when, tired of looking for recognition on the part of Rome, she thinks of possible union with the non-episcopal churches, I trust we shall frankly respond."

A Pastoral Ministry.—"The subject of preaching is too large a one for me to touch under the limits of this occasion, but if anything I can say may have weight with my younger brethren, I would urge them to consider the question of their efficiency as pastors. I sometimes fear it has not its due place among our ideals. There is a laudable ambition in the minds of most of us when we are young to attain to pulpit excellence. There is

intellectual and moral gratification in preaching, especially to those who appreciate it as our people generally do. To be popular is delightful, and ministers win popularity and take rank in the church more directly by their pulpit powers than by anything else. Now my point is not that too much pains are given to preaching, but that the duties of the pastoral office are liable to be underestimated in comparison with it. Perhaps it is because I am growing older, and have larger experience of what is involved in the life of a family, but it is my strong conviction that no minister does a better or more abiding work than he who interests himself in the daily life of his people, who wins the confidence and esteem of the young, whose sympathy is quick in times of sorrow, who visits the sick, and brings his personal influence to bear upon the homes to which he has access. I know well the difficulty of our itinerant ministry, how easily it may produce an itinerant cast of mind unfavourable to local concentration, and a sustained interest in individuals; but it remains true that we must be pastors as well as preachers if we are to win the hearts of those under our charge. I have heard a gifted young brother say, 'I do not profess to visit,' as though it were a merit, a distinction, a thing to be proud of. Such a man must not be surprised if his people care as little for him as he cares for them, and if another, and perhaps less gifted, brother with something of the pastoral heart in him is loved and honoured in a way that he is not. If the neglect of pastoral duty is in some instances and to some extent compensated by the high quality of the Sunday sermons,

that is something, though it may be doubted whether the loss in one direction is quite balanced by the gain in another. But suppose the not impossible case of the minister who 'doesn't visit' preaching sermons of no great excellence after all—what then? I have heard of such cases."

Ministerial Training.—"I think that we must make up our minds steadily to raise the standard of ministerial education. The Methodist ministry has always been a practically efficient ministry, but a training that would be sufficient in one period and under one set of circumstances is not necessarily adequate in another period and under other conditions, and it is my strong conviction that in the England of the twentieth century that will not be an efficient ministry that is not highly trained. We have entered upon what is in many respects an age of transition, and not least so in the sphere of religious thought and church polity. I do not say that old truths are crumbling—truths do not crumble—but old modes of expressing and applying truth may need to be revised. Ministers must know what currents are running, what tendencies are making themselves felt. Our universities and high schools are giving us in every congregation young men and women who, though they do not ask us to give them university extension lectures slightly tinged with Christian thought, have a right to expect the preacher to speak as one who shares the knowledge and culture of our time. Now does any one of us regard the present training of our ministry in this respect as ideal, or even adequate? Is the three years' term—too often cut short by the demands of our system—suffi-

cient? And that three years' training, be it remembered, is not a course of theological instruction given to men who have already had a training in arts, but one that for the majority of students includes general education.

"I do not know whether Methodism, that was born at Oxford, will go back to Oxford, whether that or any other university will in the future give a part at least of the training our ministers receive; but in any case we must seek to draw into our ministry the choicest products of all classes in our church, and aim at giving them the best training both in arts and in theology that is to be had, and so equip them for the great and varied duties the twentieth century will bring."

Methodism and Politics.—"One of the possible dangers to which I have referred is that of seeking to use our compact and organised strength in the sphere of politics. There is some juncture of public affairs on which, say, some of us feel strongly, a phase of policy, some action, real or imagined, on the part of a government or an opposition which we desire or dislike. Well, we have a compact organisation. There are eight hundred circuits, and the address of every superintendent can be found in the minutes of conference, and a circular letter would reach every one of them in the course of two posts. There are thirty-four district synods, and surely a brother would be found in each of them to move an identical resolution if he were furnished with it. And there is the Conference itself, with its enormous weight and influence. What a machinery to use! What a power to wield! And here is an occasion when it could

be used to such good effect ! I do not wonder that the possibility of capturing this Conference should haunt the minds of public men looking round for allies and reinforcements. But I trust we shall continue to maintain as a church our independence and neutrality, and preserve our individual civic freedom on public questions. There are indeed few political issues of such a nature that all good men must necessarily be on the same side ; and when such an issue does arise there will be little need of denominational action as such—the motives that govern good men generally will then suffice. . . . I believe that concerted action in the political sphere is about the last use we should make of our influence as a church, and that in the meantime the best political service we can render to our country is to bring the power of a living Christianity to bear upon the people at large, and so to assist in the formation of a public opinion hostile to wrongdoing of every kind, and favourable to truth and justice, to religion and virtue.

“ To some it may seem desirable to have in the House of Commons a compact body of men representing Methodism, acting in its interests and speaking in its name—a Methodist party, in fact, with which leaders would have to reckon, and which the party whip would summon on division. For me that ideal has no attraction. I rejoice to see men belonging to our church pass into public life and attain distinction there ; and if they carry into public affairs the spirit and the character formed amid the ministries of Methodism, it would be no trouble to me if half of them voted in one

lobby and half in the other. Does any one say that in that case they would neutralise one another, and might as well not be there at all? My answer is, that good men do not neutralise one another in public life because they belong to different parties. On the contrary, they are each others' allies and helpers, by supplying that saving element of moral seriousness and Christian principle without which politics may easily become the most worldly and least admirable of human pursuits. Let us then aim at producing good men for the nation's service, and not be disconcerted, but rather count it gain, if they are not all of one school of thought, or associated with one particular political organisation. If we succeed in doing this it will not lie with any one to twit us with political insignificance, or with the tame surrender of our proper influence."

The Conference over which I presided was not, if I remember rightly, distinguished by any striking incidents or epoch-making legislation. The weather during our session was exceptionally fine, the temper of the assembly was uniformly good, and everything went smoothly and happily. I found my duties just sufficiently exhausting, and at their close I took my holiday with all the zest of a released schoolboy. Accompanied by my wife and eldest daughter I turned my face northward, and was soon among the Scottish hills and lakes.

I have always been responsive to the spell of Scotland, its scenery, its traditions, its "note" in the literature of the British isles. Though my temperament bears witness that the hundred and twenty years my family has spent in England

have made an Englishman of me—environment triumphing over heredity—my imagination keeps its hold of the dim and misty centuries during which my ancestors were Highlanders, and will not let them go. And, perhaps, they have not altogether let me go, for a racial strain may survive when it has ceased to be predominant. And this reminds me of a truly Highland Macdonald whom I met years ago in New Zealand. He himself had lost no characteristic of the land of his birth, and he sought an interview with me with all the eagerness of a fellow-clansman. I could see that he was disappointed in finding me one who was little better than an Englishman. I explained in an apologetic manner that, while I had a good Highland pedigree, my family had now been settled in England for a century or more. This explanation he accepted, and added in a manner to reassure me, “For after all, the heather, and the parritch, and the Psalms o’ David leave their mark to the third and fourth generation.”

My presidential year was, as may be supposed, a year of hard work. In addition to a heavy correspondence, and attendance at numberless committees, I find that I visited eighty-six different towns ranging from Aberdeen to Penzance, preaching one hundred and fifty times, and taking part altogether in two hundred and eighty-six services of one kind and another. I travelled nearly twenty thousand miles, and slept away from home two hundred and nine nights out of the three hundred and sixty-five. But in all these respects I have been surpassed by many of my predecessors and successors. At the Burslem Conference of 1900

I laid down my office in health as good as that in which I had entered upon it, and thankfully passed out of "the fierce light which beats upon" the president's chair to the mild twilight in which ex-presidents spend such eventide as may be given them.

There is little more that need be recorded of my year of office. It had its amenities as well as its labours. I was presented at Court, I dined with the President and members of the Royal Academy, with the Lord Mayor of London, the Lord Mayor of Liverpool, and with two or three Cabinet Ministers. My journeys to every part of the country enabled me to make brief but pleasant visits to many of my friends. I was everywhere most kindly received by our own people. In addition I took part in various public functions of a non-denominational character, or connected with other churches than my own. All this was cheering in its way, and agreeably tempered the labours and inconveniences of the year.

At that time the Boer War was occupying all minds, and causing much anxiety and sorrow, though now almost forgotten because of the stress of a mightier conflict involving graver issues. A Transvaal War Fund for the relief of our sick and wounded soldiers was raised on the appeal of the Lord Mayor, with the Mansion House as its administrative centre. To this I was wishful that Methodists should make a substantial contribution. Many were already doing so in their respective localities, and in association with various organised efforts throughout the country. I was therefore dissuaded from launching any large scheme

that might weaken local efforts and produce disappointing results. No denominational organisation was therefore attempted, no committee formed for the purpose. But I felt that there was room for a personal appeal on my part, addressed through our newspapers to those who were not contributing through any other channel, asking them to send their gifts to me, my friend, the Rev. Walford Green consenting to act as treasurer. The response was most gratifying. On the conclusion of my effort I received the following letter from the Lord Mayor :

THE MANSION HOUSE, LONDON.

May 25th, 1900.

REVEREND AND DEAR SIR,

I have received with great pleasure the last instalment, £528 12s., of the handsome contributions, amounting in all to £10,483 10s. 3d., which the Wesleyan Methodist Church has made during the last few months, under your auspices, to the Transvaal War Fund.

This sum is in addition to collections sent here by the Ministers direct, or through the Local Mayors. I shall be glad if you will take some opportunity of conveying to the Wesleyan Congregations my sincere thanks for their kind sympathy and practical generosity in the matter.

Their munificence is the more gratifying when one recollects how sorely the Wesleyan Missions in the Transvaal have been tried through the war, and how liberally the Wesleyan Community have responded to these calls and claims from their distressed brethren in South Africa.

Sincerely yours,

ALFRED J. NEWTON,

Lord Mayor.

The REV. F. W. MACDONALD,

President of the Wesleyan Conference.

To another incident connected, though less directly, with the Boer War, I may briefly refer. The minister in charge of Wesley's Chapel, City Road, well known for his courage and success in carrying out great financial schemes, was then engaged in a considerable effort on behalf of that historic place of worship, and it was part of his plan to arrange a public luncheon at which the scheme should be launched and contributions invited. On such an occasion it is important to secure a distinguished or influential person to preside, a policy that my friend was not the man to neglect, and he counted himself fortunate in securing the services of Mr. Chamberlain, at that time Secretary of State for the Colonies. I had not been consulted in the matter, as indeed there was no reason why I should be, and I knew nothing about it until, upon its becoming known, a sudden and unexpected storm broke out, and I was overwhelmed with protests against Mr. Chamberlain taking any part in the intended meeting.

It was a time of considerable political tension, and in some quarters there was hot and bitter feeling. Few things are deadlier than dead politics, and more particularly those shifting phases of them that belong to party history. So it is needless to try to explain why at that particular time Mr. Chamberlain was the object of intense dislike in certain sections of the political world where he had formerly been held in almost idolatrous esteem. Such, however, was the case, and the announcement of his proposed visit to Wesley's Chapel, and of his presiding at a meeting in connection with it, was the spark that ignited a good deal of gun-

powder. Outsiders joined cheerfully in the fray. A newspaper, not accustomed to show any interest in Methodism, or indeed to take notice of it in any way, called upon its readers to save it from being dishonoured by Mr. Chamberlain's presence in its historic sanctuary. It urged them to send their protests forthwith to the President of the Conference, giving my name and address, and suggesting that a post card would serve. There were those who scorned the post card's "scanty plot of ground," and wrote indignant sheets, but the post cards were the favourite missives. They flowed like a stream in spate. They beat upon my house, they choked my letter-box till the bewildered postman delivered them tied up in bundles, fifty or more at a time. They protested in every key, from mild deprecation of what was supposed to be my action in the matter, to denunciation and threats and personal abuse. Mr. Chamberlain was referred to in language that would require a liberal use of asterisks before it could be put in print; and my share of guilt was that of conniving at, if not devising, the profanation of a sacred place by his being received there. Some of my correspondents went further, and reproached me for my general and lifelong wickedness, now to be fitly crowned by an act of sacrilege; while one of them declared that my conduct was what might be expected from one whose brothers-in-law painted immoral pictures! Perhaps the lowest level was reached by a writer whose acquaintance with the Hymn Book enabled him to parody a hymn of Charles Wesley's much prized by Methodists. "When you take Chamberlain to

A Luncheon that did not Take Place 249

defile Wesley's Chapel," he wrote, "I hope you will give out,

Come, Holy Joe, our hearts inspire,
Let us thine influence prove,
Source of the old Satanic fire,
Fountain of lies and blood.

In view of the organised opposition of which there could be no doubt, and considering the possibility of an unseemly disturbance at the meeting itself, it was finally determined—wisely or unwisely—that the proposed luncheon should not take place. Mr. Chamberlain was informed of this, and he at once courteously released from their invitation to him those from whom he had received it. I think he understood the situation. His own battles he was quite capable of fighting and quite willing to do so, but he was not willing to involve the friends of City Road Chapel in any of the odium that might attach to himself as a politician. He said to me, "In accepting their invitation I had no political end to serve. I should have liked to show my goodwill to the Methodists, and I had intended to say something of the influence of Methodism in the British Colonies."

It will be readily believed that the episode I have described was extremely unpleasant to me. A few months later I had the opportunity of assuring Mr. Chamberlain that though he had many political opponents among us, it was very far from the mind of our people that he should be treated with discourtesy after his acceptance of an invitation given to him in all good faith. He said he had not been troubled at all by the

turn things had taken, though he would have been glad if it had been otherwise. Finally, to show his friendly feeling, he accepted an invitation to dine with me and a number of my friends to whom it would be a pleasure to meet him. It was to be a private social gathering, at which no reference would be made either by him or by myself to what had recently occurred. My guests, between thirty and forty in number, consisted of ministers and laymen of various ways of thinking on public questions. Dr. Rigg and Mr. Hugh Price Hughes were of the company, and each of them was amongst the after-dinner speakers. Mr. Chamberlain was much at home among us, and made a felicitous and kindly speech—keeping his cigar alight throughout the course of it, be it said—and I think that none but pleasant impressions were left on the minds of those who were present.

My term of office came to an end at the conference of 1900, which was held at Burslem. There I handed over the seals of office to my successor, the Rev. Thomas Allen, on the spot where I began my ministry thirty-eight years before. It was a place endeared to me by many memories, and still has associations for me that time only strengthens and hallows. I have the most vivid recollection of the congregation that used to gather there more than fifty years ago. I see the long since vanished families in their old familiar places, the aged men and women in the free seats, and the Sunday-scholars in the gallery. I recall the names and faces of children to whom I was at once minister, friend, and playmate. Some few are left, gray-headed men and women now, them-

selves parents or grandparents, but most of them are gone. They are widely scattered, they have found distant homes, or have passed to that home which is at once so distant and so near. Visiting in late years that scene of my earliest ministry, the number of those who knew me at that time is small and grows ever smaller, but I am thankful to have a place, if not in personal memories, in the records and traditions of the old chapel at Burslem.

Some slight exposition of the law and procedure in the case of retiring Presidents of the Conference may here be permitted. The President of the Wesleyan Methodist Conference never resigns, never abdicates—word made familiar to us of late—still less is he removed from office. He expires—that is all. His lease terminates. His term of office runs out. Be he the best or worst of Presidents, he holds office for a year only, and when the year expires, so does he. Then for a year he is *the* ex-president, and for the rest of his life he is *an* ex-president. The distinction is a real one. During that first year some beams of the light which beats upon the occupant of the chair still linger and play around him. In the absence of its lawful occupant he resumes his former seat and presides over the assembly. His utterances in Conference continue to carry some official weight, and in various matters he is naturally consulted by his successor. The demand for his services on public occasions, though greatly diminished, does not wholly cease. When those of the President cannot be secured, the ex-president is recognised as a next-best, though a new chapel of any pre-

tensions can hardly be said to be opened with other than maimed rites if the President does not officiate.

One privilege all ex-presidents possess. They are life-freeholders of the conference platform, and sit there in graduated order for the remainder of their days. On the floor of the house there may be at times a little difficulty in getting a good seat; on the platform there is none. Once a man has passed the chair, his seat is assigned and secure. In his first year he sits immediately on the President's right. Then he takes his place as the last man in the slow-moving procession of ex-presidents, gently advancing year by year as others take their seats below him, and death makes vacancies among those in front of him. It is an immemorial process, having its aspects both of humour and of pathos, and is strictly observed in an assembly not over-weighted with ceremonial regulations and formalities. Given the age of those concerned, the rate of advancement towards the front of the procession could, I suppose, be calculated by an actuary, but my own experience may sufficiently indicate it. Starting from the last place in 1901, I had in a dozen years come to be the second in seniority of ex-presidents, being junior only to my friend Dr. Watkinson, our seats on the platform bearing witness to the fact. I have explained these matters, which are of little importance, for the benefit of those who are unacquainted with the inner life of the Methodist Conference, yet not altogether uninterested in it.

With one or two exceptions I have been personally acquainted with all the Presidents of the

Conference of the last sixty years. A list of them is before me as I write, awakening many memories of my own past life and of theirs. With some of them I enjoyed intimate friendship, whether it was that of an elder and a younger man, or of contemporaries. They differed greatly, as may be supposed, in mental qualities and calibre, in spiritual gifts, and in the particular kinds of service they rendered to the church. Some were theologians, like Thomas Jackson, and Dr. Hannah, Dr. Burt Pope, Dr. Banks, and Dr. Randles. Dr. Osborn and Dr. Rigg were men of great powers largely devoted to constitutional questions, masters in debate, and of exceptional authority on all matters relating to the historical development of Methodism. William Arthur was a man of many accomplishments, and for years a spiritual leader whose influence was both intense and far reaching. He had travelled widely, and had intercourse with many of the most distinguished men of his time in this and other countries. In certain departments of historical study he was an expert and an authority. His power as a preacher and a public speaker was, in the years of his comparative physical vigour, equalled by few, and his writings made his influence still more widely felt. Morley Punshon stood alone in respect of his extraordinary oratorical gifts, and the unexampled popularity they brought him. But there were others in the succession whose effectiveness as preachers was generally recognised. Of these I may mention John Rattenbury, Richard Roberts, Gervase Smith, and Thomas McCullagh. Dr. Moulton's reputation as a scholar gave great distinction to his presidency,

and to this was added a character beautiful in its humility and gentleness ; and Charles Garrett, one of the best loved men of his day, has also a place of his own in our annals for philanthropic labours, and the sweetness and saneness with which he advocated temperance and social amelioration. One other type of distinction is represented in the list of Presidents—for there are many paths that lead to the chair of the Conference—namely, that of administrative ability, of power to deal with current questions of legislation, of method, of adjustment and organisation. There is abundant scope for the exercise of these qualities in the Methodist Conference, and one who possesses them in a marked degree can hardly fail to come to the front. John Bedford, fifty years ago, and Henry J. Pope, some five and twenty years later, afford striking illustration of this. Each of them had great influence over the Conference in his day, and each has left his mark upon the organisation and institutions of his church.

The list of Presidents to which I have referred is one which a Methodist may regard with satisfaction and thankfulness. It is not composed of great men, if that term be used in the sense that generally attaches to it. Great men are scarce at all times and in all places, in Church and State, in literature and the arts, and we must not seek to disguise the fact by unduly lowering or extending the term. A succession of great men as Presidents of the Methodist Conference, or as Archbishops of Canterbury, or as Prime Ministers of Great Britain is not to be looked for. There never has been such, and it is little likely that there ever will be.

It does not seem, indeed, to be part of the scheme of things that there should be. But if in the case either of an elective or of an hereditary succession, a good man is followed by another good man it is well ; and when one who had gifts and qualities that fitted him for his place is followed by another equally fitted for it, though in a different way, that also is well. If we wait for the coming of great men, nine-tenths of the offices in Christendom, religious or secular, will remain vacant for a length of time that will, to say the least of it, be inconvenient.

As I look back, then, upon the fifty or sixty Presidents of the Conference whom I have known, I am not disquieted by the scarcity of great men amongst them, of men, that is, unmistakably marked as such. They have been good men, and it is no platitude to say that that is the supreme consideration. There have been men of many and varied gifts in lesser and in greater degree. There has been distinctiveness in the service each has rendered, but they have preserved unbroken the trust that was placed in them, and maintained the spirit and traditions of their office. And further, I may say that, sprung from the whole body of the ministers, as they in turn have sprung from the common life of the Connexion, they represent, alike in their best qualities and in their limitations, the Methodism of the nineteenth century. It produced them, it impressed its type upon them, and will not object if its spirit and aims are judged by the kind of men they were.

I will take my leave of the subject of past Presidents by telling a pretty little story con-

cerning one of the most venerable of them that has not yet found its way into the stream of traditional anecdote. Some fifty years ago I was the fellow-guest of the Rev. Thomas Jackson in the house of a friend near Liverpool. He was then nearer ninety than eighty years of age, and a singularly beautiful old man. His abundant white hair, his comely face with its peaceful and benevolent expression, his homely aspect and manner, were such as became the last representative of the generation that grew up under the shadow of John Wesley. I was present when he took his leave. He had thanked our hosts for their kindness to him and given them his blessing, when the lady of the house said, "I have a favour to ask of you, Mr. Jackson, before you go." "And what is that, Madam?" he said. "That you will give me a kiss." For a moment the old man looked grave, and then, with a twinkle in his eye, said, "I will, on one condition." "And what is that?" said she, now slightly embarrassed. "That you will give me another," was his prompt and gallant reply, and the bargain was sealed forthwith.

Toward the close of 1900 I had the opportunity of taking part in proceedings connected with the union of the Free Church of Scotland and the United Presbyterian Church. The event was important in itself, and perhaps even more so in its probable influence upon the future religious life of Scotland. For many years things had been moving in the direction of union, Principal Rainy, the foremost of Scottish ecclesiastical statesmen, being its chief advocate and promoter. The case was not so simple as those at a distance might

suppose. An outsider can seldom judge aright of the difficulties lying in the way of such a union as that which was proposed and has now been happily effected, but they were many and real. Divisions and separations in churches are easier to bring about than reunions, and that for reasons some of which may be unworthy, but others not entirely so. A division which arose upon a single definite issue can seldom be healed later on by an agreement or compromise upon that particular issue. Some think that when the original cause of separation is disposed of, nothing remains but to say, "As you were," and the gulf will close, and the dividing lines be effaced. But it is not so. Developments will have taken place that increase the distance between the separated bodies; new men have arisen, and new forces come into operation; a new atmosphere has been created, and new traditions established. The original quarrel or controversy may be almost forgotten, but a host of influences have since come into being to fortify the position of the one body and the other, and tend to make their separation permanent. Those who are labouring in this country for the union of churches will do well to remember that they have to deal not only with the formal and definable reasons for separate existence, but with hindrances which, if less definite and tangible, may be even more difficult to overcome. Sentiment, feelings, attachment to accustomed uses, modes of thought and expression that have gained acceptance, count for much in the life of churches, as he who seeks to ignore or over-ride them will discover. In all our churches there are those

who cling to them almost as tenaciously as to the major articles of their belief.

These conditions existed in both the Scottish churches concerned, and they had to be dealt with patiently and kindly, so as to leave as small a proportion of irreconcilables as possible. Questions of a more strictly constitutional character were satisfactorily settled, and the union was effected on October 31st, 1900. The public formalities connected with it took place in Edinburgh, and I was deputed by the Conference to attend the celebration as its representative and the bearer of its greetings and good wishes to the United Free Church. It was a great occasion, and I witnessed some stirring scenes. I had also the opportunity of meeting in private some of its principal leaders, men who by their gifts and distinction of character had risen to foremost places in Scottish ecclesiastical life. The great public meeting that crowned and completed the celebration was held in the Waverley Market, transformed for the evening into a hall that seated some six thousand people, and there I delivered my message, following Dr. Parker—who represented English Congregationalism, and speaking to the largest audience it was ever my fortune to address.

I need say nothing here of the anxious time through which the United Church had almost immediately to pass owing to litigation in which a small minority of Free Churchmen—soon to be known as the “Wee Frees”—challenged the legality of the union, and for a while succeeded in holding up the consummation. A Royal Commission was finally appointed by the Government with the

Earl of Elgin as chairman, to make inquiry as to endowments, covenants, and conditions of various kinds concerning which there was dispute. Later on I appeared before this commission and gave evidence respecting the relations of the Free Church of Scotland and the Methodist Church in the field of Indian missions. But I need not dwell further on events abundantly recorded elsewhere, and in which my own part, though full of interest to myself, was of little importance.

One story, however, I may tell that will serve to illustrate the kind of feeling to be met with among some of the least enlightened, but by no means the least impassioned, opponents of union in the Highlands. My informant was a sprightly lady from the Isle of Skye, whose sense of humour gave her a keen appreciation of the incident, and enabled her to describe it with delightful effect. Everyone knows that the United Presbyterians were familiarly known by the name of "U.P.'s." Two drovers, the one an uncompromising Free Church man, and the other a fiery "U.P.," came from Skye to Oban by the steamer with a consignment of cattle for sale. Business done, they spent the night at the same inn, supped together, and together smoked their pipes and comforted themselves after their usual fashion. Conversation, when it had exhausted market topics, naturally got upon the ecclesiastical question of the day. They grew hot and angry over it, and their language broadened and shook off restraint. They expressed their contempt for each other's churches, their leaders, and everything connected with them. At length the champion of the U.P. order of things

denounced his opponent and all his ancestors, winding up with : “ Your father was a thief, and your mother was a witch.” In ordinary circumstances there would have been a fight ; but this was an ecclesiastical dispute, so, instead of springing at his adversary’s throat, the representative of the Free Church traditions contented himself with replying : “ *May be they was, but they wasn’t U.P.’s !* ”

CHAPTER XI

1900-1903

My Connection with the British and Foreign Bible Society—
Centenary Deputation to Australia, New Zealand and Ceylon
—Impressions and Experiences.

FROM an early period in my ministry I was warmly interested in the work of the British and Foreign Bible Society, and took such opportunities of furthering it as came in my way. I still have by me a copy of the Bible in modern Greek presented to me by the Society's committee in 1877 in recognition of some slight service I had rendered. My advocacy of the Bible Society had, however, begun some years before, and in 1873 an incident occurred that helped to establish and confirm me in it. The occasion on which I "found myself"—if I may use the expression—as a speaker for the Bible Society is not worth describing in detail, but may have brief mention. I had been invited to speak at the annual meeting in the Free Trade Hall, Manchester. Bishop Fraser presided and gave an admirable address. The hall was crowded, the audience enthusiastic, and I have seldom seen the promise of a finer meeting. All went well until the indiscretion of a speaker, who spoke far too long and not to the point, wore out the general patience and all but brought the meeting to an untimely collapse. People rose in numbers and moved towards the doors. Men put on their hats. The meeting was at the point of dissolution—

liquefaction, one might almost say—when the Bishop, after much tugging at the speaker's coat-tail, compelled him to sit down. There was not a moment to be lost when I rose at the Bishop's despairing request to see if I could arrest the stampede. Fortunately I succeeded in doing so. Though a considerable part of the audience had already gone, the movement was stopped, people resumed their seats, and the meeting was saved.

The incident was a good deal commented on at the time, and led to my engaging still more widely in the public advocacy of the Society's work. Three times I have had the honour of taking part in the annual meeting in London. One of those will long be remembered. Exeter Hall was filled to its utmost capacity. The chair was occupied by the Earl of Harrowby, President of the Society, and the principal speakers were Dr. Thomson, Archbishop of York, the Rev. C. H. Spurgeon, and John McNeill. I do not know that I ever saw or heard three men on the same platform who possessed in an equal degree the powers that tell upon such an audience as that which they addressed. The Archbishop, though an old man, spoke with his accustomed weight and impressiveness. Mr. Spurgeon was in failing health, and not far from the close of his great career. I sat next to him, and when he rose to speak, leaning upon the rail in front of him, I could see his whole frame shake and tears roll down his cheek as the great assembly rose to its feet and cheered again and again. He spoke in a subdued key, gently and tenderly. There was little of his old raciness and vigour, no stroke of combat or flash of homely wit,

as in simple terms he expressed once more his unshaken confidence in the sacred writings that are able to make men wise unto salvation. The audience was deeply moved. A great soldier of Christ was taking his leave of us, his warfare all but accomplished. He died shortly afterward. In Mr. McNeill were the frame, the blood, the tongue of a Scottish peasant in full manhood, a glowing soul, and springs of humour and of pathos. To these his hearers responded, now with laughter, now with tears. It was an exceptional trio of speakers, even for Exeter Hall—the scholar-statesman Archbishop; the veteran preacher, the most far-reaching pulpit voice of his time; and the ardent evangelist, dramatic, pictorial, unconventional, and altogether very human. These three would have been a generous provision for any meeting, but there was a fourth speaker, and I was he. My chief duty was to see to it that I did not get in the way of my colleagues, and to the best of my ability I fulfilled it.

During the last twenty-five years more particularly I have given to the Bible Society, when it could find employment for them, all the time and strength I could spare from other duties. This has brought me into happy association with many of the best people in the land, lay and clerical, of all denominations. It has taken me into the homes of Churchmen, Dissenters, and members of the Society of Friends, where I have seen more clearly than in the pages of any eirenicon that though there are many Christian Churches there is but one Christian religion, and that its spirit and its fruits are everywhere the same. In journeys more than I can number, my bodily and nervous strength have

often been strained to their utmost. My leisure has been given up and my studies laid aside as I travelled through the length and breadth of the country. I have sometimes found the conditions under which Bible meetings were held—may I say it?—dull and depressing; but the cause, the aims, the ideals which supply the motives for it all, have never lost their hold on my imagination and on my convictions. And if it should please God that my last speech in public should be on behalf of the Bible Society, I should count it an honour and a happiness after which I might well sing my *Nunc dimittis*.

I have yet to speak of the most notable event in my long association with the Bible Society. Early in the year 1903 I was asked by the committee to visit Australasia on their behalf, in company with the Rev. H. A. Raynes, home superintendent of the Society. The special object of the deputation was to secure, as far as might be, the co-operation of the churches in Australia, New Zealand, and Tasmania in the world-wide celebration of the Society's hundredth anniversary which was to take place the following year. The proposal seemed to me at first an impossible one. I had entered on my sixty-second year, and doubted my fitness for such an amount of travel by sea and land as it involved. Then my duties as missionary secretary seemed to present an insurmountable obstacle, unless, indeed, the missionary committee should so approve the request as to release me from them, and lend me, as it were, to the Bible Society for special service. There was also a personal and domestic side to the question that naturally weighed

with me. I was the head of a large family, with sons and daughters at an age when a father's presence and influence are of the utmost importance. The admirable wife and mother on whom the welfare of our home so largely depended was frail in health and frequently suffering, and I dreaded the effect upon her of the added cares which my absence would bring. These were weighty considerations, calling for much thought. By degrees, however, the hindrances in the way of my accepting this mission were removed. My own committee, taking into account its close and friendly relations with the Bible Society, and having, as always, a deep sense of the value of its service to the cause of foreign missions, agreed to arrangements that would set me free to accept its invitation. So on the official side of things the way was clear. On the personal side the difficulties lessened as we looked at them. My wife, with her usual unselfishness, and strong in her confidence in the love and loyalty of her children in the absence of their father, would not allow me to decline on her account the call I had received. And when it was suggested that my eldest daughter should accompany me, she felt that her companionship and care of me in my journeyings removed much of her anxiety. One other question remained to be considered. Were my health and strength such as to warrant my undertaking a plan of travel for the greater part of a year, in various climates, under conditions to which I was unaccustomed? To obtain a competent opinion on this question it was agreed that I should consult an eminent physician, and if, upon examination, he found any just

cause or impediment why I should not undertake it, I promised not to do so. I had an interview with Sir Thomas Barlow, who, so far from saying "Thou ailest here, and here," saw no reason why with reasonable care I might not safely do all that I was asked to do, visit the southern hemisphere, and face the somewhat arduous duties of the deputation. So the matter was settled, and I began at once to make the necessary preparations for my journey.

We left England early in April. Our programme was to go first to New Zealand, spend some six weeks there; thence to Tasmania, where two or three weeks would probably be sufficient, and give the remainder of our time to Australia. It was left to local committees to arrange details of places to be visited, and services and meetings to be held. This was admirably done, upon the whole, though at times I thought that these excellent authorities must have forgotten that the members of the deputation had only mortal bodies, and that it was natural on their part to wish to take them back to England not quite worn out.

There are various ways of reaching New Zealand, each of which has its attractions and advantages. That which we selected was from Southampton to New York, thence by rail to San Francisco, and from the latter port to Auckland.

Our voyage across the Atlantic was uneventful: what more can one wish for in a voyage? I had my misgivings, founded on previous experience, on the subject of sea-sickness, but happily did not suffer from it. And here I may record the fact, to the envy and admiration, it may be,

of other travellers, that I had never a touch of it, in good weather or bad, during my journey round the world. The Atlantic, the Pacific, the Australian seas, the Indian Ocean, the Mediterranean—all were kind to me, or else I had outgrown the susceptibility to sea-sickness which in earlier years was only too pronounced. At the same time, I never felt sure of my immunity as though the "freedom of the seas" had been conferred upon me once for all. Rather was it given to me from day to day as a thing that might not be continued, and with no promise for the morrow. But the result was as I have said. Even in the stormy waters between New Zealand and Tasmania, where, as our captain said, "You may reckon on bad weather nine months in the year, and will probably get it the other three," nothing worse happened to me than a couple of days' confinement to my berth, during which I was able to read and to take my meals in tolerable comfort.

In America I had the pleasure of taking my daughter to various places and scenes that I had visited before, to New York, Chicago, and San Francisco, to the falls of Niagara and the shores of Lake Ontario. From Chicago we took the most southerly of the trans-continental routes to San Francisco, passing through the region of the early Spanish settlements. It is a region still bearing witness in its place-names, its old buildings, and its mixed Spanish-Indian population, to a stage in the history of America that seems remote indeed. But it serves to remind us that first Spain and then France seemed likely to dominate the great western continent, before the course of events

finally assigned it to English influence and control, and made it the sphere of a national life derived in the first place from British sources. The likelihood of this for a long time seemed small, and it is matter for not unprofitable speculation as to the results in the history of the world, if to a Latin and not to an Anglo-Saxon people had been committed the development of modern America and the determining of its type of civilisation.

After spending a day or two in San Francisco we sailed for New Zealand. Our steamer was much inferior in size, speed, and accommodation to that which had brought us across the Atlantic, but for this we were prepared, and had no reason to complain. For the first day or two that we were on the Pacific it did not quite do justice to its name, suggesting to some minds the thought that its alluring designation had been given to it "sarcastic." But the grey skies and cold winds were soon exchanged for settled sunshine and smooth water, and the sponsors to whom it owes its name were vindicated. My hope and expectation of the Pacific Ocean were realised. Day by day the heat increased, but deck-awnings, light clothing, and other devices availed to prevent discomfort. The solitude was very impressive. We seemed to have the ocean to ourselves. The Atlantic is a highway busy with traffic; not so the Pacific—such traffic as there is seems lost in its vast spaces. No sail was ever in sight. We might have been

the first that ever burst
Into that silent sea.

Whatever our speed might be, we were still the centre of a circle of blue water whose horizon was unbroken by any visible object. Only a flight of gulls accompanied us for some two thousand miles, living on the ship's bounty and entertaining the passengers by their evolutions in the air and swift descents upon the water. On the sixth or seventh day out we touched at Honolulu, and to our great pleasure had several hours ashore. Good friends who had been notified of our arrival came on board and carried us off to enjoy such hospitality as the time would allow them to offer. There are, I believe, many earthly paradises, and surely Honolulu is one of them. The climate, the scenery and surf-beaten shore, the genial native population with a picturesque sprinkling of Japanese and Chinese, the cheerful town, and the houses and gardens of the American residents, all make Honolulu as delightful a place of call in a long voyage as can be imagined, and we wished it had been possible to prolong our stay.

A few days later we crossed the Equator. None of the ceremonies that one has so often heard of were carried out. I suppose that in the old days of voyaging, to cross the line was so rare an event in a traveller's life, and so much less frequent in the life of the seaman, that it moved the imagination more than it does now, when crew and passengers alike take it as a matter of course. As I was crossing the line for the first time I should, under the old order of things, have had to undergo a more or less painful initiation, or secure exemption by payment. As it was, little was said and nothing was done to mark the event. Neptune

did not come on board, no one was lathered with tar and shaved with a piece of rusty hoop-iron, and Charon did not collect his fares from travellers who shrank from the ordeal. And it was the same when, some months later, I again crossed the line on returning to the northern hemisphere. It is true no one "spoke disrespectfully of the Equator," but no one took much notice of it. On each occasion, however, I had the pleasure of covering my own shadow by standing upon it, and subsequently of seeing it come, as it were, from under my feet and grow longer day by day.

Our only other place of call before reaching New Zealand was Tutuila, the easternmost island of the Samoan group. To this I eagerly looked forward. It seemed like visiting the dream-world of my childhood. Robert Louis Stevenson has brought these islands within the range of interest and affection for many who had previously never given them a thought. His home at Vailima is known to lovers of literature as Abbotsford and Rydal Mount and Gadshill are known, and Farringford, and Brantwood—visited not only by the rare, occasional pilgrim to such shrines, but by multitudes of others in happy imagination. But it was not the glamour derived from Stevenson's person and writings that made me long for even a glimpse of the South Sea Islands. Early associations were at work within me, and romantic stirrings of an elemental kind. When I was yet a small boy Robinson Crusoe was my bosom friend, and Williams of Erromanga and Hunt of Fiji among my prime heroes. Desert islands with coral reefs and coco-nut palms and

bread-fruit trees, with goats on the hills and turtles on the shore, all abounded in my realms of fancy. I loved savages, especially if they were black and had bushy heads of hair and carried great clubs. My affections were divided between missionaries and pirates, each calling having points in its favour, but I loved them both so long as they lived on an island, or sailed and had adventures in the South Seas. In my most exalted moments I resolved to be a missionary and preach to cannibals under a palm tree; and then again I longed to be a pirate and command a rakish schooner or a big war canoe, and capture prizes and hide my treasure in a cave. The two ideals gave rise to moral conflict within me which for a while I sought to settle by compromise. I asked myself how this would do—be a pirate on week-days and a missionary on Sundays? But always the vision was with me of beautiful green islands, with the ocean breaking in white foam on the reefs, and the palm trees rising tall and stately almost from the water's edge. And now that I was about to see a real South Sea Island, these childish memories revived and reasserted themselves for a dreamy hour or two, to be put in their place after brief indulgence and yield to thoughts of another kind.

Tutuila now lay right before us, apparently a mountain summit whose roots were deep in the ocean beneath. It was clothed with tropical vegetation from the shore-line to its highest peaks, with no visible harbour or landing-place. But our good ship knew her way in. With a swing of her helm she made a sudden turn and opened to us the entrance, hitherto concealed, of the great

natural harbour of Pago-pago (pronounced Pango-pango). It is thus described by Stevenson: "The island is nearly severed in two by the long-elbowed harbour, about half a mile in width, cased everywhere by abrupt mountain-sides. The tongue of water sleeps in perfect quiet, and laps round its continent with the flapping wavelets of a lake. Its colour is green like a forest-pool, bright in the shallows, dark in the midst with the reflected sides of wooded mountains."

Into this fascinating but somewhat weird retreat we slowly glided, and before we had come to anchor dozens of men and boys were swimming round the ship, shouting, gesticulating, and diving for small coins, much as I have seen them do at Naples and at Colombo. When we landed we were surrounded by groups of natives, men, women, and children, who smiled and laughed, and cried "Talofa! talofa!" (My love to you.) They were decently—some of them smartly—dressed, and looked prosperous and comfortable. There were many little cottages about, and in the village a church and school-house. Two generations ago these people were naked savages: any party of Europeans that landed would have been well armed, and even then the risk would have been great. As it was, none of us carried any weapon but an umbrella. The change from the gun to the umbrella—symbols of two very different orders of things—is suggestive. And it may be said here that change has been brought about not by the soldier, the statesman, or the trader, but by the missionary. The same thing is true throughout the island groups of the South Pacific.

It is due to the missionary that they are now safe and pleasant places of call for tourists, the homes of planters and merchants, and chosen fields of exploration and scientific research. The veriest cynic in such matters cannot do less than admit that the missionary has his uses.

Within this land-locked harbour the heat was intense and the mosquitoes at their best—or worst ; so after brief homage paid to the enchanting scene we were glad to be on board again and resume our voyage.

We landed in Auckland on Monday morning, May 11th, 1903, having left Southampton on April 4th. After a journey by land and by sea that had occupied a little more than five weeks, our work now lay immediately before us. The weather that we found was in sharp contrast with that of the tropics through which we had lately passed ; nor had it anything in common with the pleasant month of May as it lives in English tradition—a tradition that heroically survives in the face of much experience that contradicts it. The southern world was having its winter, and the form it took was that of cold, blustering winds and heavy rain. We were met at the wharf by local representatives of the Bible Society, and taken to a hotel where rooms had been secured for us. The days we spent in Auckland were made up of “crowded hours.” Private gatherings and public meetings and services followed each other in quick succession. Much hospitality was shown. We lunched with the Governor, Lord Ranfurly, and Lady Ranfurly, and dined and drank tea with friendly hosts both clerical and lay, and on all

these occasions speeches were expected and made. The authorities were good enough to give Mr. Raynes and myself first-class passes over the entire railway system, a courtesy that added to our comfort and considerably lessened our travelling expenses during our stay in the country.

Before finally leaving Auckland, our friends very kindly arranged for us a visit to Rotorua, one of the show places of New Zealand, about a hundred and seventy miles south-east of Auckland. It is a volcanic region in some parts of which the very ground is hot, and throbs and trembles with convulsed movements from beneath. The soles of my boots were scorched as I stood, and a stick that I thrust a few inches into the earth was charred and smoking when I drew it out, suggesting a very thin crust between us and the fires beneath. Springs of various temperatures are plentiful, some warm enough for the children to play in by the hour together, others boiling fiercely. The Maori villagers make abundant use of this free and unlimited supply of hot water for cooking and washing their clothes, and for all other purposes for which hot water is required. Where the water is just comfortably warm, idle people of both sexes spend much of their time in it, gossiping with one another, or sitting in solitude with minds as nearly vacant as may be. One old woman I saw thus sitting in a warm pool smoking her pipe, and quite unconcerned at the presence of our party, who not unnaturally found her an object of interest.

But the geysers are the most impressive features of this weird region. They have often been scientifically explained, and I can add nothing to

what has been written. Like other volcanic phenomena, they are among the most striking instances of nature's departure from her usually serene and leisurely way of working. To say that a geyser is an intermittent spring of hot water does slight justice to its tremendous qualities. In depths that can never be explored it pants and groans and wrestles with unknown forces, gathering strength and increasing in wrath till the supreme moment comes. The power that restrains is broken and borne down, and from the blowhole through which its labouring breath had been heard a column of boiling water leaps two or three hundred feet into the air, carrying with it stones and ashes from the fires beneath. For a few minutes, more or less, it spouts in triumph, and then grows faint and fainter. Its rage is spent. It slackens and dies down, and there is silence until, roused by fresh provocation, it renews the never-ending struggle. We had as our guide an old Maori woman named Sophia, a remarkable and almost unique specimen of her race for intelligence and force of character. She gave us a vivid account of the eruption at Tarawhera in 1886, when the celebrated pink and white "terraces" were destroyed in a catastrophe akin to that in which Pompeii and Herculaneum perished eighteen centuries before.

After this never-to-be-forgotten excursion Mr. Raynes and I settled down in earnest to the work of our deputation—if, indeed, settled down be the proper term to apply to perpetual movement and an unceasing round of engagements. The places to be visited—being for the most part small places—

were divided between us, he striking off in one direction and I in another, meeting again and combining our forces at the more important centres of population, such as Nelson, Wellington, Christchurch, and Dunedin. To describe all this in detail is unnecessary, and certain general observations may suffice. Everywhere we were warmly received and kindly treated. Domestic life is, generally speaking, simple and unpretending throughout New Zealand, but hospitality is frank and ready. More often than not my daughter and I were entertained by ministers, sometimes at the Methodist, sometimes at the Presbyterian, manse. I fear we must often have incommoded our hosts, but they did their best to prevent our seeing it, and stoutly denied the fact when I suggested it. In one home where we stayed I found that my host, a brother Methodist minister, cleaned my boots after I had gone to bed. Sooner than allow this, I told him that I would go to bed in my boots, or if he insisted on cleaning them I should insist on cleaning his.

All the forms of ecclesiastical organisation to be found in this old country of ours are reproduced in New Zealand, notwithstanding the opportunity afforded by a new country without traditions and inherited institutions of simplifying things and making a fresh start. I spent two or three days in a little township of about twelve hundred inhabitants in which I was at the trouble of counting the separate churches there represented. There were Roman Catholics, Anglicans, Presbyterians, Wesleyan Methodists, Primitive Methodists, Congregationalists, two kinds of Baptists, and three

groups or fellowships of Plymouth Brethren. Necessarily, all the congregations were small, all the ministers underpaid, the churches in debt, and the religious life of the community, not too highly developed and effective at the best, was weakened by divisions, sub-divisions, cross-divisions, and by the competitions and rivalries springing out of them. But this is a thorny question which, having touched for a moment, I will now leave.

Some of my journeys had their difficulties, and occasionally a spice of danger, and I may here quote from my diary. I should say that I had left my daughter in Wellington :

" May 27th.—A wet and stormy day. Leaving the wharf soon after noon, we reached Picton in the south island about 6 P.M., distance fifty-three miles. The sea was rough in the straits, but Picton lies a dozen miles or so up a sound or fiord. We had much difficulty and discomfort in landing. It was pitch dark and raining heavily, and the small wharf had a steamer alongside. A thunderstorm added to the wildness of the situation. Getting ashore at last, I made my way through mud and pools of water to the station, and after an hour and a quarter reached Blenheim. Mr. Spencer, the Methodist minister, met me at the station and took me to the church where I was to speak. Tired, wet, and hungry, I addressed the meeting composed of those who had ventured to brave the weather.

" May 28th.—Rose at a quarter to six. It was still as dark as night, and the rain coming down in a deluge. I breakfasted with Mr. and Mrs. Spencer, and at 7 o'clock took the coach for Nelson.

It was a journey to be remembered. We forded the Wairoa river, which was swollen and running strong, the water reaching the axles and invading the body of the coach and, as we bumped slowly over the boulders in the river-bed, threatening to sweep us away. The four-horse team, changed five times during the day, was splendidly driven. The rough and heavy roads, where there were any roads at all, the many streams to be crossed, and the steep ascents and descents made it difficult and dangerous travelling. I was the only passenger, and so had the service of the driver and twenty horses all to myself. We halted for half an hour in the middle of the day, and I was warmed and fed at an 'accommodation house' in the Rai valley. For the last two hours we were in the dark, reaching Nelson at 7 P.M., having driven ninety miles. Mr. Williams, the minister, took me to his house, and thence, the rain still falling heavily, I went to the meeting and spoke for three-quarters of an hour, the Bishop of Nelson, Dr. Midas, presiding."

I had not overestimated the danger of the crossing of the Wairoa. Not long afterwards, when it was being attempted under similar conditions, one of the horses fell in mid-stream, the coach was overturned and swept away, and my skilful, gallant driver was drowned.

I find an entry in my diary at this time on the subject of the weather :

"The weather so far has greatly disappointed expectation. Everyone speaks of it as exceptional and refers to the perfect weather that preceded our arrival. But the fact is, this is winter, and

bad weather cannot be excluded from its programme. When there is sunshine it far exceeds, in warmth and brightness, the sunshine of our English winter, and I can only hope that we may have more of it."

I rejoined my daughter at Wellington, and accompanied now by Mr. Raynes, travelled southward, spending some days successively at Christchurch and at Dunedin. Here we had large congregations and excellent meetings. I next visited alone several smaller towns, and we finished our work in New Zealand at Invercargill on Monday, June 22nd. We had spent six weeks in the two islands, I had visited all the principal centres of population and many of the smaller settlements and townships. Everywhere we met with great personal kindness and hospitality, but did not always find a very lively interest in the cause we were advocating. If in older countries people's minds are occupied and their time filled up with their business and their pleasures, to the exclusion of the higher aims and objects of life, we need not expect it to be much otherwise in younger communities, where the zest of living is fresh and strong, and the claims of the immediate, both in work and in play, are felt to be wellnigh irresistible.

Leaving New Zealand from its most southerly port, we sailed for Tasmania, a three days' voyage across a stormy sea. As we drew near to the island we had for some hours a range of fine, bold cliffs running parallel with our course, as noble a coastline as one would wish to see. The immediate approach to Hobart contests the palm of

beauty with Auckland and Sydney Harbour, the word "harbour" being used in each case in a geographical, not an engineering, sense. It is not a question of wharves and docks, but of coast formation, of indented bays and surrounding hills, of rare colouring of land and water, and off-lying islands, rocky or verdant. These three natural harbours must be reckoned among the chief beauties of the southern hemisphere, and main sources of prosperity to those who have brought regions previously inhabited by savages into the fellowship of the civilised world. It is not necessary, least of all for a visitor, to decide upon their respective claims to supremacy, though Mr. Kipling seems to give his vote in favour of Auckland when he writes :

Last, loneliest, loveliest, exquisite, apart—

On us, on us the unswerving season smiles,

Who wonder 'mid our fern why men depart

To seek the Happy Isles !

We had a hearty reception in Hobart, the Governor, Sir Arthur Havelock, presiding, the Mayor and ministers and people of all denominations being present at the meeting that gave us welcome. At another meeting held in the town hall a day or two afterwards, the Bishop, Dr. Mercer, was in the chair. We crowded as many engagements as possible into the fortnight we spent in Tasmania, but some had to be abandoned owing to a slight outbreak of smallpox in the northern part of the island. Moreover, we received notice that we should not be allowed to land at Melbourne unless we were effectively vaccinated

before leaving a Tasmanian port. This was disconcerting, but of course we complied with the regulations, though on reaching Melbourne Mr. Raynes was detained on board till next day, as his recent vaccination refused to show indisputable signs. He was vaccinated once more, and was somewhat reluctantly released from quarantine next morning.

We landed at Melbourne on July 12th, and had to try to believe that we were in mid-winter. A slight hoar frost in the morning that gave a pleasant crispness to the air was generally followed by brilliant sunshine and genial, not excessive warmth. But this kindly winter soon passed away and there was a steady increase of heat during the remainder of our stay in Australia, and but for the mosquitoes that came with it I found it altogether enjoyable.

As the programme of our engagements opened out before us it became evident that our labours in New Zealand were but a preface or introduction to the main business for which we had come. The six busy weeks we had spent there were to be followed by four still busier months in Australia. Here the ground to be covered was vastly more extensive, and the distances from one place to another correspondingly greater. A detailed account of my journeyings would be wearisome to writer and reader, and I shall content myself with a brief summary of my Australian experiences. As in New Zealand, Mr. Raynes and I were only together when visiting the principal towns. In Melbourne and Sydney, in Brisbane, and in Adelaide, excellent arrangements had been made to

give publicity to our mission, and to make our meetings effective. The leading representatives of the churches rallied round us, and the newspapers were friendly in their reports and comments. Among the chairmen who presided over our meetings were Sir Harry Rawson, Governor of New South Wales, Sir Herbert Chermide, Governor of Queensland, whose speech was of far more than ordinary merit, the Bishops of Melbourne, Newcastle, and Adelaide, and Chief Justice Sir Samuel Way, also of Adelaide. From my fellow-Methodists I received abundant and hearty recognition. I was entertained at many public and semi-public gatherings in the most hospitable manner, and in Melbourne a special meeting of welcome was held at which two thousand persons were present. The fellow-feeling, or freemasonry, as it is sometimes called, which knits world-wide Methodism together, was in strong evidence. One private gathering, at which my friend Sir William McMillan was host, was of special interest to me. I was invited to meet at luncheon a few of the most distinguished men in the public life of Australia, members of the Federal Parliament. There were present Sir Frederick Holder, Speaker of the House of Representatives ; Sir John (subsequently Lord) Forrest, Minister for Home Affairs ; Sir Henry Wixon, President of the Legislative Council of Victoria ; the Honourable W. H. Irvine, Premier of Victoria ; Senator Simon Fraser ; Sir Langdon Bonython, Member for South Australia ; Mr. Winter Cooke, Member of the House of Representatives ; Sir William McMillan, with the Rev. E. H. Sugden and Mr. Henry Sugden. These names fairly represented

the political life of the great self-governing Commonwealth. British by race and in mental and moral temperament, and Australian in the particular sentiments and sympathies proper to their Australian citizenship, they impressed me with their shrewdness and practical ability, and with a certain spacious imaginativeness concerning the future of their country, and of the Empire in which they held no inconsiderable partnership. Their speeches at the table did more than give me information, they gave me visions that helped to prepare me for the part that Australia has taken in the recent tremendous war. Each of these gentlemen was good enough to write his name for me upon a card that lay conveniently at hand. On one side it is a bill of fare, such as you might find in any hotel or restaurant ; on the other are the autographs of men concerned in the government of a strong, free Commonwealth sprung from British seed, proud of itself, confident of its future, still speaking of the far-off parent soil as "Home." What is there quite like this in the history of the world ? Those autographs are, to my mind at least, a document suggestive of much, and as such I preserve and prize them.

While in Australia I made the acquaintance of several persons whom I should like to have known better, had circumstances permitted. There is no uniform rate at which friendships grow, but there are cases in which two persons meeting for the first time feel at once that the possibilities of true friendship are there, each recognising them in the other and conscious of them in himself. But we are caught up and carried away before this

can be. Nothing comes of it—only a pleasant memory is left, and a sense of life's limitations in this its present stage—and so it was in my case. Some friendships, however, whose foundations had been previously laid, were happily renewed and increased. I was the guest for some time in Sydney of Mr. and Mrs. Percy McArthur, members of a family dear to me for many years in England, and home affections that I shared with them drew us very closely together. And Dr. Fitchett, that admirable writer, most genial of companions, intellectually keen, morally sympathetic, large-hearted, kindly—the hours I spent with him were such as ripen friendship more swiftly than do years of intercourse with natures more cold and self-contained than his. Another dear friend, an old student of mine at Handsworth, gave me the pleasure that one receives from seeing early promise more than fulfilled, and the development of fine qualities in an honoured and useful career. The Rev. J. Prescott, Principal of Newington College, with whom I spent some delightful days, drew out my affection no less than my admiration as we took up our friendship at the point it had reached in earlier years, and carried it to further stages. As I came to know his later, more developed self it made me thankful, and, if I may say it, increased my self-respect, that I had had a share in his training.

Another old friendship was renewed in Melbourne with the Rev. E. H. Sugden, Master of Queen's College. It wants a brighter, more versatile pen than mine to do justice to "a man so various" as "Ted Sugden"—scholar and divine,

Master of Queen's, and one-time President of the Wesleyan Conference ; a good preacher and speaker, a musician, a journalist, a ready wit, and an incorrigible humourist. Not only did "perpetual sunshine settle on his head," but it played and flickered through his speech and lighted up his home. It did not desert him in his classroom or at the lecturer's desk, and would even accompany him to grave committees. Not seldom did he shock his seniors by his unconventional ways, but they could not be angry with him for long, so winning and irresistible was his good nature. The past tenses I have used do not, I am glad to say, imply that my friend's lovable qualities are things of the past, but I have tried to describe them as I found them when my daughter and I were his guests. The happy family life in which for a while we sunned ourselves and were refreshed in body and mind is one of the brightest memories of our Australian tour, and I would at this distance of time and space renew my thanks to Mr. and Mrs. Sugden for kindnesses that will never be forgotten.

In Australia, as in the modern world generally, the tendency is for people to gather in town centres, notwithstanding the attraction of broad lands available for settlement. The people generally do not like to be far away from newspapers and tramlines and places of amusement, from bustling streets and shops and electric light. They are more disposed than they used to be to find farms and sheep and cattle-runs dull. As a result of this, the proportion of the entire population of New South Wales to be found in Sydney, and of that of Victoria in

Melbourne and its immediate neighbourhood, gives Australian statesmen something to think of, even as in our older country the question of rural population versus town population is becoming a pressing one. The cities named are noble cities, throbbing with life in which all the elements of modern civilisation are present—politics, commerce, arts, industries, education, religion, and philanthropy. They are also great seaports, with an outlook upon the world at large, and a continual going and coming that keeps them in touch with human affairs generally. Melbourne is the statelier city, a great part of it having been planned and laid out on a somewhat grandiose scale. Sydney, truer perhaps to English type, looks more as if it had followed its impulses and responded to circumstances as they arose, and had grown rather than had been extended according to plan.

Brisbane is the less developed capital of a less developed state than either Sydney or Melbourne, and has more of the tropics in her blood as well as in her climate. But she has a charm of her own now, and a high confidence in her future.

It is her voice we hear in Mr. Kipling's verse :

The northern strip beneath the southern skies—

I build a Nation for an Empire's need,
Suffer a little, and my land shall rise,
Queen over lands indeed !

Nowhere did I receive heartier welcome ; nowhere had I a pleasanter sojourn than in the home of Mr. Archibald, whose death not very long after my visit deprived Brisbane of one of her best and most useful citizens.

Adelaide, the chief city of South Australia, won my heart at first sight. Not so big, or populous, or rich as Sydney and Melbourne, it impressed me with a certain smiling friendliness difficult to describe; as a place it would be good to live in, not too brisk and bustling, not too dull and sleepy, with a genial climate, leaning towards the higher ranges of temperature, and yet not trying to show how hot it could be if it liked. Perhaps my host's garden, with its subtropical plants and trees and strange and beautiful birds that walked in a stately way upon the lawn, and the botanical gardens near at hand, biased me somewhat in my judgment of Adelaide as one of the pleasantest places in the Southern world. We were the guests of Sir Samuel Way, Chief Justice and Deputy-Governor of the State. He was a man of many accomplishments, a distinguished lawyer and experienced administrator, a lover of literature and art, hospitable and genial, without pretence or affectation of any kind, and an unmistakable Christian. I recall with grateful and affectionate remembrance the days my daughter and I spent with him and Lady Way, a remembrance now made pathetic by the fact that they have both since passed away, and the home of which they were the life and light is now the home of others. The meetings we addressed in Adelaide were hearty and well attended, and I preached in three Methodist churches and one Baptist church during my stay. I also addressed a considerable body of students of the University, and the boys at Prince Alfred College. With the Bishop of Adelaide, Dr. Harmer, I had some very pleasant intercourse, which has been renewed in

England since he became Bishop of Rochester ; and I lunched and spent an hour or two with the Governor, Sir George Le Hunte. He had previously been Governor of Fiji, and I found him full of knowledge and kindly sympathies. I could not but think with satisfaction and pride—and I have done so on similar occasions elsewhere—of the admirable class of men by whom the Empire is served throughout its widespread dependencies, men for the most part well-bred and highly trained, and almost without exception honourable and just men. The offices they hold are part of a great and well-ordered system, but their personal qualities give to that system a strength and an effectiveness it would not otherwise possess. And of the class of men to whom I refer Sir George Le Hunte impressed me as a fine representative. I may add that a like impression was made upon me by Lord Tennyson, Governor-General of Australia, in whose company, as I smoked a cigar and conversed with him, I seemed to be brought very near to his illustrious father, the poetic idol of my early days.

From my headquarters at Adelaide I visited several places in the fulfilment of my duties ; of these Mount Gambier, 300 miles to the south-east, was the most distant. Our work in this State was brought to a close in Adelaide by a hearty farewell meeting over which the Chief Justice presided.

For the completion of our duties in Australia it now only remained for us to visit the State of West Australia. This involved a four-days' voyage, as there are no other means, or were not then, of getting from Adelaide to Perth, our next destina-

tion. Sailing from Largs Bay in the steamer *Orotava* on Thursday, October 29th, we reached the port of Fremantle on the following Monday. The voyage is one that is rather dreaded by travellers, as it includes a good thousand miles across the great Australian Bight, which has an evil reputation for its heavy, rolling seas. We had no really bad weather while crossing the Bight, but for two days we found the slow and heavy swell somewhat disturbing.

We made our headquarters at Perth, the capital of the State, and had large and successful meetings. From Perth we fulfilled engagements at places more or less distant, but our programme was not a heavy one. As I have said elsewhere, the denominational distinctions we know so well in England exist in Australia, and lines of social demarcation are not altogether wanting. But in respect of both there is, I think, freer and easier intercommunication than there is with us, always excepting a rigid clerical minority to whom the principles and methods of the Bible Society are so repugnant that they cannot in any way associate themselves with it or its representatives. I do not, however, remember a single Anglican Bishop in Australia and New Zealand of whom this could be said. Personally, they were kind and friendly, and officially they gave to our missions valuable support; and at Perth, as in many other places, the Bishop was prominent in his advocacy of the work in which we were engaged.

To many people in this country West Australia is known as Westralia—a happy verbal abbreviation—and that only in connection with its gold mines.

Arrangements had been made for some meetings to be held in the mining district, and I undertook the journey, a somewhat trying one. While in Victoria I had visited both Bendigo and Ballarat, great gold-mining centres in the early days, and scenes of adventure, of wild and lawless doings, and of tragedies of success and failure that will live long in Australian tradition. But they are now well-developed towns, the mining industry is organised and scientifically carried on, and the general prosperity seems well secured. The Western Australian gold cities are in an earlier stage of growth, and have hardly, I imagine, the prospect of similar expansion and permanent wellbeing. The climate and soil are entirely unfavourable to agriculture of any kind, and consequently to settlement on the land and the growth of population. Coolgardie and Kalgourlie were called into existence by the gold mines, and are absolutely dependent upon them. When these give out, so far as I can see they must give out too. They are towns in the desert. The country around can grow nothing, and cannot even supply man and beast with water to drink or to wash in. The present water supply is brought in iron pipes a distance of two hundred miles or more, and is of necessity costly. This was a heroic venture of Sir John Forrest's, when the lack of water was causing intolerable discomfort, and threatened ruin to the mining enterprise. It was a bold scheme, happily successful. Many are the tales, some humorous, others tragic, that are told of the days when water was dearer than whisky, and a man would save a bottle of soda-water for a week with a view to washing his hands and face with

it when Sunday came. I pass by the gruesome stories of travelling parties found dead of thirst and sun-dried by the heat, to give one of the lighter incidents of which I heard. It was surface-mining then ; no pits sunk as yet—nothing deeper than the hole or burrow that a man and his partner could dig between them, riddling the soil as they threw it up, hoping to come upon a good vein or pocket, and meanwhile picking out here and there particles of the shining dust that served to keep hope alive. There had not been a cloud in the heavens for weeks. Day after day the sun shone with pitiless glare, and the ground palpitated with heat. Water that a man could drink was sold by the pint, and it is said that champagne was sometimes cheaper. As for washing, that was a luxury not to be thought of save at rare intervals, when the need became imperious, and expense was no longer considered. The story goes that a certain miner had long kept a bar of soap by him, and waited week after week for the rain that a possible thunderstorm or other atmospheric disturbance might bring. A day came when the sky darkened and heavy clouds gathered, and there were signs of a coming storm. The miners dropped their tools and came out of their holes, eager and expectant. Some declared they had felt a raindrop. The owner of the bar of soap, thinking that his hour had come, hastily took off his clothes, soaped himself carefully all over, and then, lighting his pipe, sat down on a box outside his tent and waited for the coming shower. Alas, it did not come ! The clouds rolled by, the sun shone out again, and there was nothing for him but to scrape off the

soap from his person with a knife and go on as before.

The impression made upon me by the physical aspect of the goldfield appears from a note in my diary : " A weary region this ; no grass, no trees, no water. Heat, sand, flies, empty tins and broken bottles the chief features. Everything to me repulsive or depressing." At Great Boulder, the central or inmost shrine of this " richest mile of earth," these features were most pronounced. Nevertheless, in Coolgardie and in Kalgourlie I found excellent people and happy homes, and once more realised that men and women everywhere are much alike, both in their goodness and their badness, though doubtless there are regions of the earth in which there is more goodness, and again more badness, to the square mile than there is in others. In the two towns above named we had fairly good meetings. In an outlying place that need not be named, my audience consisted of five men and two dogs, and all seven of them appeared equally uninterested in what I said.

I finished my work in Australia on Sunday, November 15th. The following day we took leave of our friends and went on board the *Oroya*, bound for England, and sailed early next morning.

Before leaving, however, we had received letters from the Bible House in London requesting us to give a fortnight to Ceylon on our way home, as arrangements were being made there for a series of meetings and services on behalf of the Society. A fortnight was the period between the arrival of our steamer at Colombo and the departure of the next steamer by the same line, and to break

the voyage in the way suggested could be effected without difficulty. To this slight addition to our labours we readily consented.

Our voyage across the Indian Ocean was prosperous and pleasant. The weather was fine, the ship well found, the company agreeable, and we suffered no real discomfort from the heat of the tropical zone. We landed in Colombo on the ninth day after leaving Fremantle. Here I had my first glimpse of the East, of the Old World where all things are in striking contrast to the New World we had just left. The streets of Colombo flowed with life, many-coloured and many languaged, Cingalese and Tamils, Arabs and Afghans, Italians and Portuguese, with a sprinkling of Chinese and Japanese from the farther East—all were there, men of many races, distinct in type and differing in garb, in gait, and in manner. Nor were our own countrymen wanting, not very numerous, but entirely characteristic. The Briton who has made his home in Ceylon—usually a Scotsman, it would seem—walks quiet and unconcerned through the crowded ways of the city, serious, self-contained, knowing what he intends to do and doing it, whether he be merchant or banker, tea-planter from the hills, or broker from the wharf or the exchange. What I saw was at first like a bewildering dream to me, a dream to which the Book of Genesis, the “Arabian Nights” and certain pages of De Quincey all contributed. It was essentially eastern, with western elements introduced that one felt were recent, and could never hope to be dominant on that soil and under that sky, dominant, that is, in the forms that life assumes and the aspects it

presents. The pageant of the streets shows how much that is western the east can accept or put up with—railways, steamships, telegraphs, and much beside—and yet remain eastern to the core. The motor-car sweeps past the bullock-bandy, and the bicycle leaves the rickshaw far behind, but bullock-bandy and rickshaw, and the things they stand for, remain and will remain.

In the streets of Colombo the turban, the fez, the straw hat, and the pith helmet are all in evidence, and also the shaven head, and the coil of black hair twisted into a knot, or swept back and gathered under a large comb, or falling in unmanly ringlets over the neck. Fat burghers and their portly wives, native gentlemen whom no one could mistake for Europeans in spite of their European coats and boots; labourers with thin, copper-coloured limbs; little boys whose full dress does not include either shirt or trousers; sleek traders, trim clerks, beggars, some venerable-looking, others repulsive, endless types, as it seemed, of race and calling and character—all these made up the panorama of moving figures that met my eye and stirred my imagination within an hour or two of my landing. Colombo, as is well known, is a great junction for the lines of world-travel, a meeting-place of many peoples, and one of the entrance gates of the eastern world, ever thronged by multitudes who come and go. It is also the chief city of a people bound to the soil by ties that only death will break, living on traditions received from their fathers which they in turn will hand on to their children. Few places on earth are better worth visiting than Ceylon, and I count it a happy turn

of events that took me there if only for two short weeks.

While Mr. Raynes went northward as far as Jaffna, I visited Galle and spent some days at Kandy. Here I saw as much as the time would permit of the missionaries and their work, and took part in several meetings, public and private. At the Buddhist temple of the Sacred Tooth I was shown everything that is shown to a visitor who is a Christian, including a considerable library. One recreation I had that I am not likely to forget. We drove some three miles to see the elephants having their bath in the river. The elephant is, I think, in the main a solemn beast, wistful and meditative in his cast of mind, but happily not without a sense of humour, which showed itself in the way he pushed his companions about, and generally disported himself in the water. But our time, of which the hours were fully occupied, was fast running out. We had received much personal kindness, and I had had my experience enlarged, and my convictions on some great subjects strengthened and made clearer to myself. I had seen what I think must be some of nature's loveliest aspects in the isle "where every prospect pleases," and had felt the stirrings of deepened fellow-feeling with races other than my own. It is doubtless true of East and West, as regards temperament, at least, and many of the conceptions and ideals by which life is governed, that "never the twain shall meet"; but there is a human nature that is common to them even now, and they have equal place in the thought of God and in the heart of the Son of Man.

A fortnight in Ceylon was not sufficient to add very greatly to my knowledge of the working of Christian missions among Buddhists and Hindoos. But I did what I could. I met and conversed with missionaries and native ministers and laymen, visited a few mission stations in the country, and several institutions in Colombo and Galle. I preached and administered Holy Communion to congregations that included Europeans and natives, and addressed through an interpreter a large gathering of native Christians. They gave me a warm welcome, and presented me with an address which was read first in Cingalese and then in English. I found much to admire in the devotion of the missionaries to their work, and in their grasp of the complex and difficult problems that confront them, and I left them with a deepened sense of the obligations under which we of the home churches lie to these servants of Christ among the heathen.

The work entrusted to us by the Bible Society was by this time finished. I felt the call of home, and responded to it with much yearning. The last stage only of our journeyings now remained to be accomplished, and we sailed for England in the *Orontes* on December 10th, landing at Marseilles on the 26th and arriving home the following day. The closing entry in my diary says: "Found all my dear ones well, and we rejoiced and gave thanks together after a separation of nine months."

Looking back upon what I regard as a memorable episode in my life, one or two things remain to be said. I owe it to the thoughtful kindness of a few friends that I was able to take my daughter

with me, an arrangement that added greatly to my happiness. In her companionship my home life was not wholly left behind, but was still in large measure with me. For correspondence with those at home she was invaluable, and her letters, longer and more detailed than I had time to write, kept my family in closer touch with us than would otherwise have been the case. To her it was an opportunity of seeing the world such as seldom falls to the lot of the young, and one that she fully appreciated and enjoyed.

In Mr. Raynes I had the best of colleagues. His knowledge of the operations of the Bible Society was far greater than mine, and supplied an invaluable element in our joint advocacy of its claims. It has been said that to travel together for any length of time is a severe test of friendship, and I think I know the reasons that justify the saying. Ours stood the test. The friendship that stood the strain of compulsory companionship by land and by sea, and of hearing each other's speeches night after night for months together, was closer knit at the end than it was at the beginning of our association, and continues to this day. Then let it be gratefully recorded that from first to last we had no accident or misadventure of any kind, no illness or special anxiety, and that we had many sources of enjoyment in the course of our travels that we had not anticipated, and freedom from difficulties and annoyances that might well have arisen. For all of which, *Benedictus benedicatur*.

As to the results of the deputation, so far as they can be ascertained, what of them?

It is well to remember that where moral and spiritual forces are concerned, the attempt to express their results in statistics or other definite form can never be wholly successful. In the course of our travels I preached fifty-eight sermons and gave about a hundred and forty addresses to audiences varying in number from twenty or thirty persons to two thousand. My colleague did no less, possibly a little more. These numbers could have been easily increased had we been working in more populous regions, where it was not necessary to spend so much time in long journeys. As it was, we were able to give considerable impetus to the Bible Society's work throughout Australasia. We explained the principles on which it is based, the aims it has in view, and the means it employs for securing them. Without going into controversial details, we emphasised the Bible's relation to the spiritual life of man and the welfare of society. Special opportunities were afforded us of appealing to the churches, and at the same time of addressing the general mind of the community, and in doing so we had the sympathy and co-operation of many of the most influential men in the British citizenship of the southern world. A new interest was created, local organisations revised and improved, and proposals for the celebration of the Society's centenary adopted. That celebration, which might without much exaggeration be termed world-wide, took place the following year. To the special fund then raised New Zealand contributed £3,515, Australia £3,464, and Tasmania £241—a total of £7,220.

In addition to these specific gifts there is abun-

dant evidence that since our visit the whole position of the Bible Society in Australasia has been greatly strengthened and improved, and my colleague and I may be allowed to hope that our labours of seven months in 1903 contributed in some measure to secure these results.

CHAPTER XII

1903-1912

Retirement from Office, and Readjustment of My Life—Occupations and Pursuits—Companionship of Books—Literary Labours—Extension of My Sphere as Lecturer.

ON my return to England at the close of 1903 I at once resumed my duties at the Mission House. My services were also in some request throughout the country to give an account of my travels and of the mission in which I had been engaged. Time passed rapidly with me as I responded to these calls, but as the year went on, and more particularly towards its close, the question of an early retirement from office began seriously to press upon me. My health was still good, and I do not think there was any noticeable diminution of vigour in the fulfilment of my public duties; but I was getting tired, to use a homely phrase, and began to feel the weight of things as I had not previously done. At the ensuing Conference I should be well on in the sixty-fourth year of my age, and should complete the forty-third year of my ministry. And that ministry had been a somewhat exacting one. I was early drawn into what I may call the public life of my church, and had spent a large proportion of my time and strength under the strain which such a life involves. To this had succeeded official life, on the larger and smaller scale, a life for which I felt that I had less aptitude than perhaps might have been expected from me,

and this in itself increased the wear and tear it cost me. So, not unnaturally, I began to desire release from its claims, release not so much from actual work as from the "harness" in which a man must go who occupies an official post and is part of a highly organised system. I desired to work, if strength to do so should still be given me, with more freedom, with a responsibility less strictly defined; above all, with more of intermingled leisure and right of selection than was compatible with the position I had long held. On general grounds, moreover, I may say I am not in favour of long retention of office, save where there is some exceptional fitness on the part of its occupant or special circumstances render any change undesirable; and in my own case I could not think that either of these conditions existed, or that my wish to retire was other than reasonable.

But other and deeper considerations were present to my mind. Of these I can only speak with a certain reserve, for they belong to that inner life which can never fully explain itself to others. But I may hint at them. For many years I had had in mind a saying of my father's addressed to me not long before his death and soon after my own ordination: "If circumstances should allow of it, my son," said he, "retire from the active work of the ministry *before you are worn out*. Try to secure a sabbath after your days of labour, and turn it to good account by gathering up the past and preparing for the life to come." I was impressed by this counsel when I received it, but the time had arrived when its significance was

more fully realised. I felt that my life now needed a change of key, one that would lessen its strain and hurry, and give opportunity to those quiet processes of spiritual growth to which the crowded years are not altogether friendly. I had of necessity lived much in public, moving constantly from place to place. For more than forty years I had been speaking from pulpits and platforms; the sound of my own voice had been ever in my ears; and my own modes of thought were fixed and confirmed by the frequent expression of them, when perhaps they should have been receiving new impulses and modifications. In a word, I wanted time to read, to think, and to pray, to commune with God and my own soul, and to submit myself, whose character had been shaped amid various forms of activity, to be re-touched and, if need be, re-formed by influences that are at their strongest when the soul has leisure to attend to them. I am conscious that I describe inadequately the thoughts and feelings with which I turned towards a life of comparative retirement, but there are those who will understand—men who, after a busy life, which they neither regret nor grudge, have found that God has reserved for the quiet later years some good gifts that He does not usually bestow in the central years of our activity.

At the Conference of 1905 I retired from the office of secretary to the Missionary Society. The Conference was cordial and kind, and entered upon its minutes an appreciation of my past services and its good wishes for my continued welfare and happiness. It also appointed me honorary

secretary to the Missionary Society, an appointment involving no definite duties, but giving me, as it were, the "freedom" of a great institution, and enabling me to keep touch with former colleagues and with interests that were dear to me. Some of my friends, with a too favourable estimate of my general vitality, thought my retirement premature, and told me so. But when asked, "Macdonald, why have you retired?" my usual answer was, "Lest in a little while you should be saying, 'Why doesn't Macdonald retire?'" Suffice it to say, that although circumstances in my personal life have in some respects taken a different shape from what I expected, I have never regretted the step I then took. I will not lay stress upon my belief that it has lengthened my days, but it has given me tranquil years that largely justify to me the advice I received from my father. As I hope to show, I have not lived an idle life since ceasing to hold office. I have given of my best to my church, while not confining myself to its beaten paths and definite tasks, and I have realised some at least of the spiritual hopes and aims that I had set before me.

I have said that my active ministry might be divided into three periods, the pastoral, extending over nineteen years; the academic or tutorial, ten years in length; and the administrative, which lasted fourteen years. To these has now been added a fourth, which I recognise as the last in my life's programme, the period of rest and of such lesser activities as can be combined with it.

I entered upon it with mingled emotions—those of the schoolboy when the holidays come, and of

Charles Lamb's "Superannuated Man" when he wrote to Wordsworth, "I came home *for ever* on Tuesday in last week," and others of a subdued but not unhopeful nature. It is common, I believe, for men who are growing old to accept the belief that no new developments are to be expected from them. At the best they will be what they have been before, though on a diminishing scale. "Fresh woods and pastures new" are not for them. Some there are, however, who do not surrender to this view. They think their possibilities are not exhausted, and that new elements of strength may even yet reveal themselves, and, late though it be, find fit employment. It is a pleasant thought for a man to carry with him in his later days, and though often illusory, it is not without sanction. One may repeat to one's self the lines in which Tennyson speaks of "bounteous hours" that

Conduct by paths of growing powers
To reverence and the silver hair,

or, better still, say with the Psalmist, "They shall still bring forth fruit in old age."

In what measure I cherished such thoughts I do not care to say. They are of the kind that it is as well to keep to one's self. This much, however, may be said. I entered upon my life of retirement with no sense of mental or spiritual exhaustion. I continued to preach almost as frequently as before. I resumed my studies and began some new ones. I gave my books notice that they and I would see more of each other than we had done of late, and they seemed to take the promise kindly. One happy change in the

daily routine was immediately established. Instead of hurrying from the breakfast-table to catch my train for the city, I went directly to my study, and now at last was able to give the invaluable forenoon hours to my highest pursuits.

My reading during the years that followed was not systematic, but was fairly extensive. My own collection of books was now a large one, and my membership of the London Library gave me a still wider range. History, biography, poetry, fiction, and literary criticism were the regions in which I found mental exercise and recreation. I think I read more old books than new ones, counting every book an old one that was written before my time. Having spoken of fiction, let me say that at no time have I tried to keep up with the ceaseless output of modern novels, thereby missing, doubtless, some good, but certainly an infinite amount of nothing. But I say this with no contempt, real or affected, for the novel as such. Many things combine to make it the natural organ, the readiest means of self-expression, for those who have, or think they have, some measure of the literary gift. It has been well said, "Prose fiction is the most democratic of all forms of literature, because it makes least demands for education and training and puts the smallest strain upon the intelligence of the reader." It is, moreover, a sphere in which real success has immediate and tangible reward, and one in which the amateur does not feel himself so hopelessly out-classed by the professional as is the case, for example, in that of science or philosophy. Never were so many readers—of a kind—as there now are, and

never were there so many people who can write—after a fashion. Hence there is little check upon the production of novels but the price of paper and the cost of printing, and the result is that he or she who takes home a novel from the circulating library because it is “just out,” more frequently than not is a reader of very poor stuff.

Nevertheless, there is no denying the immense possibilities of the novel, or the high place it actually holds in English literature. I am ever thankful that in my youth I browsed freely on Scott and Dickens and Thackeray, on Marryat and Lever and Michael Scott, on Charlotte Brontë and Mrs. Gaskell. A little later I made acquaintance with the tremendous trio of eighteenth-century novelists, Richardson, Fielding, and Smollett, and was reasonably moved and properly shocked by them, and a little later still became the willing bondsman of Jane Austen and the admiring friend of Fanny Burney.

I have not become a confirmed novel-reader in my old age, but I should be sorry to forswear the company of our great writers of fiction, or to forget the service they have done me in widening my vision of human life, and providing recreation for my mind as welcome as is rest or change of air and scene to the tired body. Not long ago, being confined to my bed for several days, I read again several of the Waverley novels that I had not read since I was a boy, and as I closed the last of them I thanked God for Walter Scott, and his noble contribution to the wholesome pleasures of life.

I have said that my retirement from office

enabled me to resume my studies. This must not be interpreted too strictly. I have little or nothing to show in the way of scholarship as the fruit of later years. Perhaps in one respect only should I speak of "studies," as the term seems to imply some severity of application and more or less of organised effort. I have studied the Bible more closely than ever before, but while availing myself of the best literature of criticism and exegesis, my chief aim has been to bring my mind and heart into closest touch with the living Word itself as the principal means appointed by God for the nurture and guidance of the spiritual life. Here Christian men and women are all on the same level, having the same needs and common access to the same sources of strength, and I have sought my share of what the Bible has to give on precisely the same terms as the humblest of my fellow-Christians. I will not take upon me to say at what period of life the companionship of the Bible is most to be desired, but of this I am assured, that as we draw near to the end of our journey and the perspective of all things alters, the Bible's ministry to the soul has a power to calm and heal and purify, to readjust and harmonise the inner life, and to give quietness and confidence that one must be old to understand—and many better men than I have found it so.

To two classes of books I have been increasingly drawn during the last few years, though they have always stood high in my liking—biography, and literary history and criticism. Under the former head I include not only biography proper, but letters, journals, diaries and other writings of a more or

less informal nature that reveal the writer's personal history and character. These are often more adequate as portraiture, and more effective in presenting him to us as he lived, than any formal biography. That is, I think, the general verdict on Montaigne's "Essays," and Pepys's "Diary," and Wesley's "Journals," and Cowper's "Letters." To these familiar instances I could add others almost as convincing. There is a "Life of Sir Thomas Browne" by Dr. Johnson, which Boswell refers to as "one of the best of his biographical performances," but after reading it one feels that Browne's letters to his sons, and the frank disclosures of his beliefs and doubts and of his reasons for thinking this or that which are to be found in his "Religio Medici," tell us more of the real Sir Thomas Browne than Johnson does. And so of Charles Lamb. We all know something of him, but, without disparaging the biographic labours of Talfourd, and Canon Ainger, and Mr. E. V. Lucas, he who has read Lamb's "Letters" knows, or is constitutionally prevented from ever knowing, the essential Charles Lamb, for in these his wit and wisdom, his genius, humours, and affections are seen rising directly from the original fount within him. And I might say much the same of my friend and frequent companion in years gone by, James Smetham, artist, poet, and "great Christian." There were few events in his outward life of which a biographer could make much; but his inner life found free expression in his letters. In them he "ventilated" his soul—the word is his own. He wrote without pose or strain. It came as naturally to him as breathing to pour out his thoughts on art, on

books, on life and on religion, and send them to his friends. He did not pretend to be a philosopher, still less was he a cynic. He looked on human life with brotherly and loving eyes, enjoying the fun there is in it, sharing its happiness, responding to its appeal for sympathy, and loving it through and through, laughing at its simpletons and treating its fools from time to time to a kindly scourging. And in the course of a "ventilator" he would pass quite naturally from describing the humours of a street corner that had tickled his fancy, to speak of the deep things of God and of those experiences of the soul in which the saints of all the ages and all the churches are one. Smetham was one of the few men I have known whom I regard as a man of genius. To speak of him as a clever or an able man would be inadequate and even misleading. He had various gifts of a literary and artistic kind, but beneath all these was that mysterious something which we call genius, a thing that none of us can define, but most of us recognise when we meet with it.

With regard to biographies generally, I must vote with those who put the biographies of poets and men of letters at the head of the list for enduring attractiveness. They are, for example, more interesting and longer lived than those of statesmen and politicians—a comforting fact, all things considered, as helping to adjust our sense of values and vindicate the quiet labours of the mind, which are as often underestimated as prominence and success in public life are overestimated. A statesman may now and again lift his task to the level of what is universal and abiding in the sphere of

mind and morals ; but how much of his work is concerned with transient issues and the surface of things, with arrangements and adjustments that have no relation to fixed, essential principles, but are undertaken with an eye to convenience, to the strength of parties and the claims of individuals. All this is deemed of high importance at the time, and is recorded at length in the "Lives" of Prime Ministers and other high political personages. But how soon it loses all hold upon the human mind ! Let a few years pass, and no one reads the pages in which it is written. The books are dead books. Their sleep is not disturbed save on occasion by someone whose business it is to search literary graveyards. In a great library that I know there are shelves upon shelves of political biography, so designated in the catalogue. The volumes are mostly stout and well bound, but the dust lies thick upon them, an outward and visible sign of the dust and ashes within. Looking upon them I am often reminded of the lines in Lowell's "Fable for Critics" :

I've thought very often 'twould be a good thing
In all public collections of books if a wing
Were set off by itself, like the seas from the dry lands,
Marked *literature suited to desolate islands*,
And filled with such books as could never be read
Save by readers of proofs forced to do it for bread.

For companionable books, books that amuse and cheer us, that quicken our mental life by bringing it into touch with life richer and fuller than our own, there are few to compare with the "Lives" of poets and men of letters. So, indeed,

I have found it, whether I was seeking recreation or stimulus to thought and studies. To such books I can never repay what I owe, but I can at least acknowledge my obligations. For years—and never more than in these later years—I have had as the companions of my solitary hours Boswell's "Johnson" and Lockhart's *Lives of Scott and Burns*, and Scott's "Journal"; *Memoirs of Wordsworth* by Myers, Professor Knight, and Legouis and others; Southey's "Life and Letters," and Campbell's "Coleridge"; Trevelyan's "Macaulay," and Lord Tennyson's "Life" by his son; the autobiographies of Gibbon, and Leigh Hunt, and De Quincey, and John Stuart Mill. Among those of earlier date I may mention the "Letters" of Erasmus, the *Diaries of Evelyn and Pepys*, the *Letters of James Howell*, the *Memoirs of Saint Simon*, and the *Letters of Madame de Sévigné*. The associations of my youth have given a special and intimate charm to volumes that enshrine the memory of Ruskin and Rossetti, of Burne-Jones and William Morris, of Madox Brown the painter, and William Allingham the poet.

Whether it be matter of congratulation or of approach, it is true of me that many, at least, of

My days among the dead are past,

but they are of those who live an after-life that still ministers to us. I love their company, and count some of them among my chief teachers, the unseen allies of my soul in its pilgrimage and warfare.

And I think few men more need to read biographies than ministers of the Gospel; and I do not refer to religious biographies merely—that

being well understood. It is our business to know and understand, if it may be so, our fellow-men, and not only those of our own class and sort. The round of our own life is not, for the most part, a wide one. We have had a certain bringing up and preparation for our work, and that has lain within well-defined limits. Year after year most of us move among the same class or classes of people. We are familiar with their modes of thought and ways of living and the types of character these help to form ; but there are whole ranges of human life beyond, whole classes of our fellow-men with whom we were never in contact, and whom, in a word, we do not understand. The average minister of religion, whether Anglican or Dissenting or Methodist, has certain types of character present to his mind, his typical sinner, his typical penitent, his typical saint. These types have been established in his mind from experience and observation, and they are true as far as they go, and so long as they are not mistaken for the whole truth of which they are, in fact, but a part. For the experience of any one of us is but small, and the range of observation narrow, when compared with the breadth and complexity of human life. There are more sorts of men and women in the world than our view has taken in, or our theories allow for ; more varieties of sinner, of penitent, and of saint than our classification recognises. What differences of mental soil and climate are to be found even in our own country, and how different the modes of thought and feeling they produce ! How differently does character develop in different atmospheres, say, for instance, in that of artistic

and literary circles, of scientific societies, of universities, and again in that of political or commercial life, to say nothing of the world of fashion and luxury! No man is to be blamed for not understanding the spirit, the influences prevailing in grades of society to which he is a stranger; but no serious thinker can leave them out of the account, or fail to consider their relation to the Kingdom of God.

And it is just here that I have found a somewhat extensive reading of biographies of service. If it has not introduced me to *all* sorts and conditions of men, it has given me the acquaintance of many whom I should otherwise never have known, and certainly never have understood. It has carried me into regions of life to which I had no other means of access than that which it supplies, regions in which the problems of good and evil, changeless in themselves, present themselves in other forms and under other conditions than those with which I was familiar. I think it has shown me the problems of human life in new light—a light that has disturbed some of one's old confident judgments of men and things, increasing at once, if the paradox may be allowed to pass, one's hopes and one's fears concerning them; although, if I am pressed upon the subject, I believe that not only "charity" but wisdom "hopeth all things, believeth all things," in the true Pauline sense of the words. Years ago I was impressed by a saying of Baxter's in his "Self Review"—a saying which increasingly commends itself to me, and to which, speaking from a lower level of experience than his, I think I can subscribe:

" I now see more good and more evil in all men than heretofore I did. I see that good men are not so good as I once thought they were, but have more imperfections ; and that nearer approach and fuller trial doth make the best appear more weak and faulty than their admirers at a distance think. And I find that few are so bad as either malicious enemies or censorious professors do imagine. In some I find, indeed, that human nature is corrupted into a greater likeness to devils than I once thought any on earth had been. But even in the wicked usually there is more for grace to make advantage of, and more to testify for God and holiness than I once believed there had been."

I will only add that these words seem to me to have received weighty comment during the recent war, in which so much of unexpected good and of unsuspected evil in human nature has been brought to light.

Of what I have referred to as literary criticism I must speak briefly. There are those, I am aware, who hardly consider it a respectable department of literature. " Read books," they say, " the great books especially, but don't read books about books." If that means anything it means read Shakespeare, but don't read Coleridge and Hazlitt on Shakespeare, or Dr. Furnivall, or Sydney Lee, or Swinburne, or Dowden, or Professor Raleigh. That is, accept no help from those whose genius, learning, and long devotion to the study of Shakespeare fit them to be the guides of those who would travel in his realms of gold. If Wordsworth could say of his sister, " she gave me eyes, she gave me ears," many of us may say the like of those who have

taught us to see and hear in that great domain of imagination and of thought what otherwise we might never have seen or heard.

And the same holds good of Wordsworth. It is not everyone who is naturally so attuned to Wordsworth's dominant notes as to feel at once their significance and authority. The reader of his poetry may easily be repelled by an almost ostentatious homeliness and simplicity both of theme and of language; and again, may find himself puzzled and helpless in the presence of a mysticism to which he cannot respond, because as yet he has not entered the sphere to which it belongs or exercised the faculties to which it appeals. If one were to say to him, "Understandest thou what thou readest?" he might well be forgiven if he answered, "How can I unless some one guide me?" I write this with vivid remembrance of my own early efforts as a reader of Wordsworth, and of encouragement and assistance received from those who were able to give them.

The literature of criticism and of interpretation and comment that has grown up around the poetry of Wordsworth is remarkable both for its copiousness and for its high quality. I doubt if any poet—Shakespeare, perhaps, excepted—has drawn to himself a larger number of accomplished and high-souled students and lovers. They form a circle—or rather a succession—of Wordsworthian scholars who have done good service by rescuing his writings from misapprehension and from perverse and unintelligent criticism, by exhibiting their true qualities and assisting others to apprehend them, and especially by setting "the young, and the gracious

of every age," on the way of appreciation and delight.

This Wordsworthian literature began with the "*Biographia Literaria*" of Coleridge, which still contains the most adequate estimate of the poet's genius that we possess, at once philosophic, appreciative, and discriminating. In the letters of Charles Lamb there are many flashes of insight into the sources of Wordsworth's strength, and also of his occasional weakness. Hazlitt, when not moved by the spirit of bitterness that at times warped his judgment and put gall into the ink with which he wrote, pushed aside the poor conventional criticism of the day, and did justice to the as yet unpopular poet. And these first interpreters and vindicators of Wordsworth have been followed by others who have built high monuments to his fame, and set in clear light the nature of the service he has rendered to mankind. Their writings are an addition to English literature second only in value to those of the poet himself, for it is happily true of those who have written about Wordsworth that few of them have failed to write well. The names of the foremost among them will justify my saying so; for they include those of De Quincey and Hartley and Sara Coleridge, of Aubrey de Vere and Henry Taylor and John Stuart Mill, of Archbishop Trench and Dean Church, of Mathew Arnold and Principal Shairp and F. W. Myers, of R. H. Hutton and Stopford Brooke and Professor Walter Raleigh. I have them all upon my shelves, with others only less distinguished, and when I have laid down Wordsworth's own volumes I have been thankful to have the echoes of his voice prolonged

to me in their pages and made audible to their last note. And so in a less degree with the poetry of Tennyson. I have been a reader of his "In Memoriam" practically all my life, and have much of it off by heart; but in making its acquaintance I was much helped by the "Analysis" of Robertson of Brighton, and since then have read with advantage the studies of this great poem by Stopford Brooke, Mr. Masterman, and others.

To the names already mentioned of writers on literature to whom I owe much in these later years should be added those of Walter Bagehot and Leslie Stephen, of Andrew Lang and Professor Saintsbury, of Mr. Edmund Gosse and Sir Sidney Colvin, Mr. Seccombe and Professor Hugh Walker, whose "Literature of the Victorian Era" is the best book of its kind I know. Literary criticism may be, and often is, poor stuff, produced by hurried writers for hurried readers; but at its best it also is literature, and that of a high order, not only ministering to the pleasure of intelligent men and women, but giving stimulus and guidance to many who would otherwise wander somewhat aimlessly in search of intellectual culture. Alike as a student and as one who finds his chief recreation in books, I set great value on such writers as I have named, and I am glad of this opportunity of saying so.

After settling down to a life of comparative leisure two kinds of employment gradually came to occupy a good deal of my time. For some years I had written nothing, but he who has once published a volume or two is never quite immune from the temptation to do the like again. True I had not

the encouragement of any great success in my former ventures, but there is always the possibility of doing better next time, and the pains and pleasures of authorship, once experienced, are themselves an incitement to renew them. My "message" to my generation had been more or less imperfectly delivered in the course of a forty-five years' ministry, but there were still some things I wished to say concerning books and studies and the intellectual life generally that were fitter subjects for an essay than for a sermon, and so I yielded to temptation and, moving still on humble lines, became an author again.

My first publication was a volume of Essays bearing the title "In a Nook with a Book." It is taken from an ancient portrait of Thomas à Kempis, which shows him in his cell with a book in his hand, and at his feet an open volume bearing an inscription, written partly in Latin, partly in Dutch, to this effect: "In all things have I sought rest, but nowhere have I found it save *in angello cum libello*," in a nook with a book. My little volume has by way of frontispiece a delightful drawing by my brother-in-law, Mr. Lockwood Kipling. He did it for me as a design for a book-plate, and as such it has served me. It shows a studious old man sitting at his desk, not in a monastic cell, but in an angle of his study. A great volume is open before him, and the shelves upon the walls are filled with others. One or two lie on the floor, and a bust of some wise man looks down upon him from the top of the shelves. There is a pleasant lattice-window with some plants upon the sill, and floating near the ceiling is a scroll

with the inscription, "IN ANGELLO CUM LIBELLO." In the pages that follow I write of my earliest dealings with books, of the mid-Victorian literature amid which I grew up, of my book-loving grandfather, of Macaulay and Tennyson and Wordsworth, of the "Oxford and Cambridge Magazine" of 1856, its one year of existence, and of the flush of poetic and artistic life to which it owed its birth, and of many things beside. I had great pleasure in writing it, though not untouched by the pathos that inevitably accompanies the invocation of old memories and associations, and it remains somewhat of a favourite with me among my productions of a bookish kind—"a poor thing, but mine own."

Another series of Essays soon followed, and was issued under the title of "Recreations of a Book-Lover," and that was succeeded by a small volume of religious and ethical studies, called "The Shining Hour," the germinant thought of which is contained in Matthew Arnold's lines :—

But tasks in hours of insight will'd
Can be through hours of gloom fulfilled.

One duty—for such I counted it—that had long lain upon my mind was now also discharged. I had had in my possession for many years a collection of letters written by my grandfather, James Macdonald, to his sons, an elder son, James, an undergraduate of Queen's College, Cambridge, who died in 1821, and a younger son, my father, George B. Macdonald. The letters extend over a period of little more than fourteen years, from 1816 to the beginning of 1831. As documents belonging to the history of my family they have an interest

for myself that I cannot expect others to share. But they have qualities of their own to commend them to any intelligent reader. Both for their matter and their form they are worthy of preservation. Written in admirable English, clear, strong, unlaboured, yet possessing a simple dignity not inconsistent with a sense of humour, they reveal the writer's character as unmistakably as any letters with which I am acquainted. They show the mind of one who was a student and a thinker, but by no means a recluse; a man of a happy disposition, based on a cheerful temperament and unshaken faith in God, with the habits and pursuits at once of a minister of the Gospel, a lover of books, and an affectionate father of a family. Born in 1761, my grandfather was an eighteenth-century man in his literary standards and ideals, and, like Dr. Johnson, when he wrote or spoke he "determined to do it as well as he could." Feeling, then, that if I were to publish his letters I should not only pay a filial and deserved tribute to his memory, but should present to others the portraiture of a fine character developed in a somewhat picturesque setting, I made arrangements to do so. I had the letters carefully transcribed, and added to them explanatory notes where necessary to make them intelligible. In the prefatory note I say: "I think I may claim for these letters that they reveal an admirable personality, and a type of life which it may surprise some to find in the modest household of a Methodist preacher in the early part of the nineteenth century." "The Letters of James Macdonald" appeared in due course. Owing to the evil custom

of modern publishers, there is no date upon the title-page of this volume, and I am unable to give it with precision. How the great fathers of the printing-press—Aldus, Froben, Elzevir, and the rest—would have “perstringed” their successors for a practice which every true book-lover detests!

One other volume I have produced, “Reminiscences of my Early Ministry,” which gives some details of my life and adventures in the Staffordshire potteries and in Liverpool between 1862 and 1866. No one knows better than myself the slenderness of these my contributions to literature, but mention of them cannot be omitted in any account of my occupations during the last few years.

The other employment to which I have referred as coming to occupy my leisure was that of lecturing. I have already said enough of my early experiences as a lecturer, and of the place I subsequently gave to lectures in the general scheme of my ministry. During my official life I had largely discontinued the practice, and had quite ceased to develop or extend it. When that had come to an end, however, and my time was much at my own disposal, it received unexpected stimulus from the invitations I received to lecture to literary societies in various parts of the country. I was previously quite unaware of the number of these societies, and of the scale on which they organised lecture-courses for their members. When once brought into connection with them there opened out to me an unexpected sphere of work of a kind that was peculiarly congenial. My engagements rapidly multiplied, and I lectured for the Carpenters’ Company in London, the Midland Institute of

Birmingham, the Literary and Philosophical Society and the Mechanics' Institute of Leeds, and a great number of institutions, more particularly in the Midland counties, and in the north as far as Glasgow, Greenock, Paisley, and Stirling.

My subjects were exclusively literary, as art and science are regions in which I have never trespassed. The preparation of my lectures set me upon the study of certain definite periods of history, and of the persons by whom they had in various respects been influenced. To the Johnson period I devoted several lectures, and as their delivery coincided in point of time with the bi-centenary commemoration of Dr. Johnson's birth, they had some popularity. Following closely upon these I lectured on Cowper, and on social life in England towards the close of the eighteenth century. From thence it was not difficult to move forward to Wordsworth and Coleridge, and the world of thought and feeling they did so much to bring into existence, and on these and similar subjects I had the preparation of previous years of reading and reflection. In other lectures I went farther afield, entering new regions of study, or returning to old ones for more thorough investigation. Of these I may mention "The Life of a Roman Gentleman of the First Century." My Roman gentleman was the younger Pliny, whose "Letters" were my quarry, and the works of Friedländer, and Dill, and Gaston Boissier tributary sources of supply. Research, compilation, and the putting of my material into final form were alike pleasant tasks. Another lecture which cost me much labour in its preparation was "The Story of

the Norman Conquest as told by the Bayeux Tapestry.” For this it was necessary to study pretty closely a fac-simile reproduction of the pictorial record of the tapestry itself, and also to find means of showing the same to the audience by lantern-slides, without which description would hardly be intelligible. This was successfully accomplished. The historical interpretation of the whole called for all the help that could be got from Freeman and Thierry, and from antiquarian critics and commentators who did not always agree with one another. Evening after evening did I toil at it, and I hesitate to say how many hours were spent, and how many difficulties encountered, in preparing an address which must run smoothly, and begin and end within the compass of a single hour or a little more. But so it is and must be with most of the work that we offer to our fellows. What costs little is seldom worth much, and the moral of it is so plain that I need not enforce it.

I think I have said enough to show that the private life on which I had entered was not an idle life. I remember when I was a youth that a master once said to me, “Macdonald, you are not idle, but you are lazy.” It was a somewhat cryptic saying, but I believe the thought in his mind was that idleness has its roots in the temperament or disposition, and is therefore characteristic, with a tendency to become habitual, while laziness is fragmentary and occasional rather than an abiding quality. But I leave it to my readers to accept or to reject the fine distinction. My own view is that a good deal may be said for intelligent and well-timed laziness, or idleness, if that term be

preferred. It has its place in the economy of life, and some of my excellent friends would have been all the better if they had recognised the fact. When after many laborious years I claimed release from prescribed duties and responsibilities, I gladly admitted judicious idleness to a modest place in my daily programme, but was far from allowing it to do as it liked with me. This, I hope, has been made plain. I retired, as I have said, at the age of sixty-three. Between that period and the completion of my seventieth year, I find from my diaries that in addition to my work amongst my books and at my desk, I preached nearly six hundred times, gave a hundred and forty-six lectures, and made just over a hundred speeches for the Bible Society. So these are not the confessions of an idle man, but rather of one who sought to make his idleness a "regulated industry."

CHAPTER XIII

1912-1918

Breaks in our Family Circle—Death of Sir Edward Burne-Jones, of Lady Poynter, of Mr. Alfred Baldwin, of Mr. and Mrs. Lockwood Kipling—My Supreme Bereavement—Earlier and Later Friendships—Mr. Akroyd—Dr. W. B. Pope; Mr Tweddle; Dr. Walford Green; Dr. Waller; Dr. Rigg.

DURING the period of what I may call my later middle-age, life went smoothly and happily with me. My health continued good, and my occupations were congenial and fairly adjusted to my strength. Old age—to borrow an illustration of Lowell's—knocked at my door and left his card, but did not come in, saying that he would call again by-and-by. The centre of my happiness through all these years was my home, and the circle of my family life long remained uninvaded and unthreatened. But as time went on that came to me which comes to all. One after another of those who were dearest to me was called away. Places were henceforth vacant amongst us, with—"Oh, the difference to" those who were left.

The death of Sir Edward Burne-Jones in June, 1898, fell upon us with all the weight of a sudden and unexpected blow. Nothing in his previous state of health prepared us for it. He was in the fulness of his powers and at the height of his fame when an attack of *angina pectoris* brought his life to its close in a moment. I have already said something of what he was to me in earlier years,

but no record of my life would be a true one that did not make mention of his subsequent influence upon it.

No two lives could less resemble each other, or seem to have less in common than his and mine, so far as their main interests were concerned, or the surroundings amid which they were set. We belonged to worlds that lay far apart, with little communication between them. Perhaps of all the worlds that make up our terrestrial system, the artist-world and the clergy-world are among the remotest from each other, and such mutual acquaintance as exists is made, as it were, through the telescope, an uncertain instrument in matters of this kind. I think I have observed that the average parson knows as much—and as little—of the average artist as the latter does of him, and more need not be said. But Burne-Jones was for me a connecting link with the world of art, with its ideals and points of view, and its living personalities. My intercourse with him kept alive within me certain intellectual sympathies that might otherwise have starved from want of nutriment, and helped me in some degree to understand that devotion to art which to those who see it only from a distance is often unintelligible. Such devotion, it must be admitted, is sometimes found in men whose nature holds little else, and apart from it their mental equipment is meagre and unsatisfactory. It is as though one set of ideas had prevented the development of others alongside of it, or drained them of their vitality. But it was not so with Burne-Jones. His nature was a rich and many-sided one, and its varied growths were not -

checked or impoverished by his master gift and special calling as an artist. Had he not been a painter he must have been a poet. He felt the mystery and beauty of life, its interwoven joy and pain, its pathos and its humour, as only large and noble natures can. He knew it through all its modes of expression in literature ancient and modern, of which he had a knowledge that a professional scholar might envy, and along with it a rare sympathetic insight and almost boundless goodwill towards men. And not in books only did life's great drama appeal to him. He loved the scenes that moved around him. He had an eye like that of Dickens for the tragedy and comedy of the streets, for the solemnity of policemen and beables, and the buccaneer-like qualities of the boy round the corner, the smiles of the organ-grinder, and the woes of the broken-down charwoman. As for the pretentious and the pompous, for men without brains and women without hearts, for conceited boys and silly girls, how well he understood them, and shrank from them, yet loving them after a fashion and finding a place for them in the great human fellowship. Few, I imagine, who in his pictures have looked on mystic regions far removed from the world we know, and seen knights and maidens such as no longer walk the earth, had any idea of the painter's genial hold of human life, of his swift-glancing humour, and of the way in which one who dwelt so much "by the shores of old romance" loved the familiar highways trodden by the feet of his fellow-men, and took pleasure in those who travelled them.

It was not his artistic genius or his intellectual

distinction that drew and held me to him through more than forty years of brotherly friendship ; it was his lovableness as a man, the charm of his personality. Others who were better qualified than I to appreciate his powers as an artist felt the same. One of the foremost of living Englishmen—or should I say of living Scottish men when speaking of Mr. Balfour?—once said to me, “ I consider Burne-Jones one of the greatest men I have ever known, and *the most lovable*. I have never known a man of equal charm.”

His death was the withdrawal from my life of certain influences that could not be replaced, but in some regions of my thought and feeling I recognise their presence still. No one would suggest that it was mental resemblance between us that served as the basis of our friendship ;

But he was rich where I was poor,
And he supplied my want the more
As his unlikeness fitted mine.

A memorial service was held in Westminster Abbey, and his body was laid to rest at Rottingdean on the Sussex coast, where he had long had a seaside home. He lies under the shadow of the little old church, where the light enters through many-coloured windows of his design and given by him.

The next break in our family circle was caused by the death of my sister Agnes, Lady Poynter. She was a lovely woman in person and in character. The charm of her presence and manner were felt by all who were acquainted with her, but only those who had her intimate friendship knew the

depth of her affection and the beauty of her disposition. As the wife of a distinguished artist and President of the Royal Academy, she was much in society, and in every way adorned the position to which she was called. She had her full share of the wit and conversational power that all my sisters seemed to inherit from their mother, and many are the choice sayings with which she enriched the family treasury ; but only the sisters to whom she was knit in closest, tenderest affection, and the husband and sons to whom her life was devoted, could speak in adequate terms of the love she bore them. She came next to me in the succession of my parents' children. We were playmates in our earliest days, then companions and trusted friends when together and good correspondents when separated, and wide apart as were our paths in later life, the bond of brotherhood and sisterhood held us in unbroken love and sympathy to the end.

She died on June 12th, 1906.

Early in the year 1908 my brother-in-law, Alfred Baldwin, was taken from us by death as sudden as that of Sir Edward Burne-Jones ten years before. Each of these our family bereavements had its own poignancy, and affected us with its own peculiar sense of loss. The place that Mr. Baldwin held in our life as a family was as distinctive as that of Burne-Jones, and equally prized by us. It was due both to his personal qualities, and to the particular development they received from his career. Unlike my other brothers-in-law, who lived and laboured in the world of art, he was a man of business, and if I said that

he was the finest specimen of his order that I have known I should not be saying too much. He was our man of the world, and a more unworldly man of the world could hardly be. As the head of one of the greatest businesses in the country, the chairman of the Great Western Railway Company, the chairman of an important bank, and an active Member of Parliament, few men carried heavier burdens of responsibility and duty, yet I do not know that I ever saw him irritable, or greatly depressed, or so engrossed as to close his mind to religion or to books, to the happy interests of his own home, or to the troubles of other people. I think I could also say that, notwithstanding his many engagements, I never saw him in a hurry, or showing signs of nervous tension and impatience. He had a gentle spirit, and very tender ways with those he loved. He was essentially a devout man, and his mode of living was in accord with the simple, primary principles of his religion. Definitely and by conviction an Anglican, he represented to me the Church of England layman in a form that had my admiration and esteem. His beneficence was characteristically unostentatious, and yet could not be hid. Near to his own house at Wilden, in Worcestershire, he built and endowed a beautiful village church, with vicarage and schools, and in that church it was his habit, when at home, to attend not only Sunday services but early morning prayers before the busy day began.

One of his ruling tastes showed itself in the number and quality of his books. Outside his immediate family perhaps no one knows his library better than I do, or has made more frequent use

of it. It was rich in theology, in history, in jurisprudence and economics, and in biography and general literature. Though never claiming to be a bookish man, he read pretty widely and he read good books. To those who know my sister, his wife and the companion of his inmost life, it is needless to speak of the unity of belief, of tastes and sympathies that knit them together, and gave to each the purest happiness that life on earth can afford.

And then came the never-to-be-forgotten morning, February 13th, 1918, when, on his return from a board meeting at Paddington, he sat down in the vestibule of his flat in Kensington and passed away without a word. Dear Alfred Baldwin! What we lost in him I will not try to say. He is of those whose "memory is fair and bright."

I cannot refrain from quoting lines—which some, at least, of those who read will understand—written by her whose sun went down the day he died, but to whom God gave the afterglow of faith and hope.

As set the sun on my life's shining day,
And darkness fell and I was sore afraid,
My heart within me fainting by the way
Was beaten down like corn by tempest laid.
But when Thy storms had broken over me,
I looked from forth the shelter of Thy wing,
And feared a world of blackest night to see ;
And lo ! the darkening sky girt with a ring
Of amber light about the horizon spread,
That turned to beauty all things where it shone.
Then one arrayed in white drew near who said,
" The glory of the day for thee is gone,
And yet, behold, thou shalt have light enow
To walk illumined by the after glow."

When my brother-in-law, Mr. John Lockwood Kipling, and my sister Alice, his wife, returned from India, where they had spent nearly thirty years, they settled in the village of Tisbury, in Wiltshire. Their selection of this somewhat out-of-the-way place owed something, I imagine, to the influence of their friends of the Wyndham family, whose seat was in the neighbourhood. Some of us doubted whether, after their stirring and picturesquely varied life in India, they would find a congenial home in an obscure English village, mainly agricultural in its pursuits, and a dozen miles or more from the nearest town. But experience justified their choice. They found a suitable house and arranged it to their liking. A studio for Mr. Kipling was put up just outside it. Indoors everything was bright and cheery, with books in plenty, and pictures and works of art, and curious handicraft that recalled their life in Bombay, Lahore, and Simla, and travels in regions beyond. No one who has lived long in India ever gets it out of his memory and ways of thought. Its hold on the imagination is enduring, and in this respect the old missionary, the retired civil servant, and the soldier whose furlough is now perpetual are alike. Mr. and Mrs. Kipling were thankful enough for the rest and peace of a home in England, and made no grievance of our cloudy skies and misty days; they took to the village maidens whom my sister trained for household service, and did not yearn for the troop of native servants they had left behind them; but India and things Indian were in their blood to the end. What surprised us most, and defeated the prophecies of some of their friends,

was that they did not find life at Tisbury dull. In India they had necessarily lived much in society, had been familiar with great officials, and seen much of civil state and military pageant, and knew everyone, so to speak, from the Governor-General to the youngest subaltern. Here at Tisbury social life was without colour or piquancy. Local topics were such as village life affords, and were chiefly of a domestic and personal nature. Intellectual companionship there was none for them to share, save that of such visitors as came to see them, and in such visits as they made to the few friends who were accessible. But they neither chafed under this nor disparaged the villagers among whom they lived. They felt kindly towards them and showed it in many ways. Mr. Kipling was a man who made all knowledge his province. There was nothing in which he was not interested, and as there were no artists or men of letters within reach he made friendly acquaintance with ploughmen; gardeners, blacksmiths, and men whose talk was of bullocks, learning much from them and generally teaching them something. My sister became a kind of court of reference to whom her neighbours made appeal in their difficulties, when, for instance, their boys turned stubborn or daughters were flighty. These held her in wholesome awe, tempered with a strong liking for her many acts of kindness. She knew how to give advice in pungent form, and at the same time to show the possibilities of better things in an encouraging way. She believed in men being good husbands and women good housewives, and would drive her counsels home with a humour that disarmed wrath

and illumined the situation. No one in the village knew as much as she did about the mysteries of dressmaking and the simple subtleties of cookery, and puzzled mothers of families found in Mrs. Kipling an oracle easy of approach.

The perfect mental companionship of Mr. and Mrs. Kipling had for foundation common ideals, with striking differences of temperament and qualities. My sister had the nimblest mind and quickest wits I have ever known. She saw things in a moment, and did not so much reason as pounce upon her conclusions. Accuracy in detail was not so much her forte as swift insight, and the kind of vision that is afforded by flashes of lightning. Her power of speech was unsurpassed—I might almost say unsurpassable—her chief difficulty being that she found language a slow-moving medium of expression that failed to keep up with her thought. We used to say of her when we were children that she tumbled over her words, because they could not come out fast enough. When she was at her ease and the subject was to her mind she was very brilliant, and her felicities of speech and illuminating epigrams were a delight to us all. She did not, as a rule, care for argument ; intuition took its place, often to our amusement, sometimes to our satisfaction. Her wit was for the most part humorous and genial, but on occasion it was a weapon of whose keenness of point there could be no doubt, and foolish or mischievous people were made to feel it. When her son, Rudyard Kipling, dedicated his " Plain Tales from the Hills " to the wittiest woman in India, he knew what he was doing, and we knew whom he meant.

Mr. Kipling was, as I have said, of another temperament and mental equipment. His mind moved more slowly and cautiously, but covered a wider range. His power of acquiring and retaining knowledge was extraordinary. His memory seemed to let nothing slip from its grasp. On what may be called his own subjects, those connected with the plastic arts, with sculpture, modelling and engraving, with craftsmanship in metals, wood, and clay, with industrial processes where they come into the domain of art, he was a great expert, learned in their history and skilful in their practice. More especially he had devoted himself to the industrial and artistic life of the Indian peoples. This was the central field in which for many years he laboured with infinite patience, and with a perhaps unequalled sympathy with the thought and instinct that underlie those native arts in which various races express themselves. In these matters he was recognised by the Government of India as a high authority, and his services were called for over a wide area of official inquiry and administration.

But these specialised pursuits by no means monopolised Kipling's mental life. His curiosity, in the nobler sense of the term, was alive and active in almost every field of knowledge. All things interested him. He seemed to know something about everything, as well as everything about some things. He was widely read, and what he read he remembered and had at his disposal. He made no show of his knowledge, or oppressed one with it, but it would come out quietly in the course of conversation, or reveal itself easily and

naturally in unexpected ways. Sometimes with a gentle scepticism he would abate the confidence of those who were too sure of what they knew, or would supplement what he had modestly advanced in a way that showed he had more at his disposal if it were called for. And beyond all this, he was a man of a loving and lovable nature, prized by us all as one of the best of brothers.

My visits to Tisbury were pleasant breaks in my London life. I generally spent a part of the morning with Mr. Kipling in his studio, and then, weather permitting, took a stroll in the country. The evenings were times of rare enjoyment. We were free to read if so disposed, or my sister would play to us as we smoked; but on the whole we preferred to talk, and some of our long arrears of conversation were now discharged. Our intercourse had hitherto been broken by long periods of separation, and our lives had had their development far apart from each other. Now we were together again, and whether we talked or were silent we were happy.

On one evening that I remember well the vicar of an adjoining country parish dined with us. He was a gentle, fatherly man, who had been vicar for many years, and knew his people well. In the quietest manner, and with just a twinkle of humour, he told us several stories of their shrewd but simple ways and quaint sayings, and among them this: "I was talking one day with one of my farmers, and when I asked after his wife he said, 'Well, sir, I 'aven't spoke to my wife for more'n four years.' 'Oh,' said I, 'that is very shocking—very bad indeed. How is it?'

'Well, sir,' said he, 'I 'aven't liked to interrupt 'er.' "

There is something very touching in the coming together in later life of brothers and sisters whose widely separated paths of life once more converge. Their common stock of memories is revived with added humour or new pathos. Old friends and old scenes are recalled, and time is for a while effectually set back. We realise, in each other at least, how little we are altered in the essential elements of our nature, how the old temperament and characteristic ways survive, and yet again how time and the discipline of life have worked changes in us in this respect and in that.

But this second summer, this happy period of renewed and deepened intimacy, was not to last long. My sister's health began steadily to fail, her strength to decline. But her courage was high, her will all but indomitable, and she held on to her round of duties, cheerful and resourceful as ever almost to the end. Her husband also showed serious symptoms of failing health, and ignoring their own ailments, each of them watched and cared for the other, but said little. My sister's nights were wakeful, and she was in the habit of rising very early and spending the time in reading or in writing. The last time I was at Tisbury she handed to me, without comment, a paper containing some lines she had written in the early morning :

AT THE DAWN

As from my window at first glimpse of dawn

I watch the rising mist that heralds day,

And see by God's strong hand the curtain drawn

That through the night has hid the world away ;

So I, through windows of my soul, shall see
One day Death's fingers with resistless might
Draw back the curtained gloom that shadows life,
And on the darkness of Time's deepest night,
Let in the perfect Day—*Eternity*.

The end was now at hand. My sister Alice passed away on November 23rd, 1910. Since the death of my brother in New York nearly twenty years before she had been the eldest surviving child of my parents, and her death once more altered the fabric of our family life and brought it into smaller dimensions. We felt it deeply, and the members of our narrowing circle drew still closer to one another.

Mr. Kipling did not long survive his wife. He was now much broken in health and spirits, and though he did his best to hold on and to hold up, it was plain that his life was nearly spent. His good friends the Wyndhams were full of sympathy and kindness, and insisted with a gentle compulsion on taking him away for a while from the scene of his sorrow and removing him to their home at "Clouds," not far distant. There he received all possible care and attention, and there, a few weeks later, he died.

Our friendship—which, as I have said, began in my early days at Burslem—had been unbroken through the five-and-forty years that followed, notwithstanding the interruption of intercourse caused by his long residence in India. Here, again, I might quote words already quoted that seem to me to contain half the secret of friendship :

But he supplied my want the more
As his unlikeness fitted mine.

There was much unlikeness between us in temperament and cast of mind, and on certain subjects we held very different opinions ; but we had many mental sympathies in common, and if we had had even fewer, his gentleness of spirit, his unselfish affection and general loveliness would have knit me to him. The charm of his personality was felt by all. Gentle, kindly, and wise, everyone liked him, and of those who really knew him I think there was none who did not love him.

Each of the losses I have spoken of told upon my life in its own way, taking from its joy and fullness something that I must henceforth do without. But my supreme bereavement came in the early summer of 1909 when, after an illness of two years, my wife, the mother of my children, was taken away from me and from them. It was a long-drawn period of sorrow for us all, and for her of suffering borne with unfailing patience and submission to the will of God. What she was to me during the forty-three years of our married life I cannot attempt to say. It can never be told, but must remain with me a sacred and precious memory. This much, however, must be said : Of all the blessings bestowed upon me in this life she was the greatest, God's crowning gift to me and to my family, a chief source of strength and happiness and a perpetual benediction. The words of another may here take the place of those I cannot write. It is Dr. Watkinson, her friend and mine, and one who knew her well, who says of her :

It is difficult to speak of a character like hers without the semblance of exaggeration. Her winsome aspect, gentle

manners, and sweetness of disposition combined to make her unusually attractive. . . . Her character found expression in perfect simplicity, sincerity, and sweetness, and we may accurately say in a gracious gaiety. Yet the soft manner and musical voice did not imply the absence of spirit and strength, and in the company of Mrs. Macdonald one had always the sense of reality and force. Pure, kind, and faithful, she won admiration and love, and it is pleasant to think of her fair figure and beautiful life. . . . Not lacking in interest in the affairs of Christ's church, she yet found her chief duty and joy in ministering to her household. Here she shone in diligence, tact, unselfishness, and sacrifice. The heart of her husband safely trusted in her. What she was to her sons and daughters cannot be told in these few lines. She knew her children, and chided, restrained, and counselled with exquisite wisdom and sympathy. . . . Through long years her maids remained in her service, feeling it a privilege to wait upon her, and she had no more sincere mourners. Her nurses speak of her with admiration and affection. We are sometimes tempted to think of domestic life as monotonous and mean ; yet it is refreshing to know of the ability and nobleness hidden away in the Christian home working out the happiest issues. Mrs. Macdonald created and held together for more than forty years an ideal Christian household, and there is no sublimer achievement.

There are in English poetry two notable tributes to beauty and worth of Christian womanhood that I have long associated with her. So fitly are they framed, they might be a poet's vision of her maiden purity and gentle, timid piety as I first saw her, and, again, of her life of unselfish devotion through the years that followed. The one is Milton's and the other Cowper's. In each of them the name of Mary is found—her name, and the sweetest and

dearest of all names borne by women—and its presence seemed to give sanction to my appropriation of the lines to her :

Lady, that in the prime of earliest youth
Wisely hast shunned the broad way and the green,
And with those few art eminently seen
That labour up the hill of heavenly Truth,
The better part with Mary and with Ruth
Chosen thou hast ; . . .
Thy care is fixed, and zealously attends
To fill thy lamp with odorous deeds of light,
And hope that reaps not shame.

So was it with her in her lovely youth.

And when I try to portray the well-proved
fulfilment of her early promise through the years
that she was my wife, I can but say :

But thou hast little need. There is a Book
By seraphs writ with beams of heavenly light,
On which the eyes of God not rarely look,
A chronicle of actions just and bright—
There all thy deeds, my faithful Mary, shine ;
And since thou own'st that praise, I spare thee mine.

* * * * *

I have owed much of my happiness in life to my friendships. The capacity for making friends differs greatly, as we all know, in different persons, varying with individual temperament and disposition, and with opportunity, which is not the same for all. Hence friendships count for much more in some lives than in others. As regards both disposition towards friendship and opportunities of cultivating it, I reckon myself fortunate. My temperament is not that of the recluse, but very

much the reverse. I enjoy life in its social and sociable aspects, and always have done, notwithstanding its disappointments, some of them amusing, others painful; and on the whole I agree with him who said, "The more I see of my fellow-creatures the better I like them." And opportunities of meeting with people worth the knowing, good people, kindly people, and in not a few instances people of admirable qualities of mind and heart, have been abundantly afforded me. Among these I have found true and lasting friends, and we have given to each other the best we had to give of sympathy, affection, and companionship. Nor have my friendships by any means run in one groove, confined to people of one type or social grade or intellectual standard. These things are not without their influence in human intercourse generally, but friendship, in the true sense of the word, is happily independent of them. A "kindred spirit" is not necessarily one who has been brought up as we have been, or bears the same social impress, or reflects at all points our own mental features. It is enough if, as the Book of Proverbs has it, "the heart of man answereth to man." Probably the writer was referring to that common element of human nature which each of us possesses as being "made of one," and in virtue of which he is man—"Homo sum." But I prefer to take it in the more intensive sense of the affinity that attracts us to some persons rather than to others, and on the basis of general kinship builds individual friendship, "heart answering to heart" with distinctness of personal affection. But I am not writing an essay on friendship. What I would say is, that

in making friends there is a selective process, partly conscious, partly unconscious, by which we find the heart that "answers" to our own, and in finding that we find a friend.

During a great part of my life many of my closest friendships were with persons older than myself. This was not of set purpose on my part, and I have been surprised on looking back to see how far it was the case, especially where brother ministers were concerned. To a few of these I may refer.

Early in my ministry I became acquainted with the Rev. Thomas Akroyd, and though, curiously enough, almost at our first meeting a certain difference of opinion led to a sharp and almost angry discussion, our acquaintance soon took on the character of friendship. We found common ground in our love of books, and then in certain views and sentiments that we were glad to find we shared, and before long our friendship was such that it did not inquire on what grounds it rested ; it had become an affection as of elder and younger brother, a source of strength and happiness to us both. He was responsive alike to my lighter and my graver moods. On him I could discharge the jest that longed for utterance, and found no one as fit as he to enjoy it ; and I could tell him my inmost thoughts and feelings as I could to no one else. Elsewhere* I have described my friend's qualities and characteristics at some length, and may quote a few lines from what I have there written :

Our intercourse ranged through almost every key in which kindred souls can commune with each other, " from

* "Reminiscences of my Early Ministry."

grave to gay, from lively to severe." In the pleasant realms of humour which so many of the wise and prudent never enter, what excursions did we not make, to our great comfort and delight! As with most men of fine and sensitive make, his gift of laughter was balanced by "the sense of tears"—*sunt lacrymæ rerum*. From a gay and boyish humour discharging itself in the brightest of repartees and the most audacious of puns, the transition to a depression bordering on melancholy was not infrequent. Physically and mentally he answered to every passing breeze and change of temperature. The shadows would chase each other across his nervous and emotional nature like cloud and sunshine following in quick succession.

My friendship with Thomas Akroyd survived all the chances and changes of the years. Whenever it was possible to do so we used to meet, and in the intervals we kept in touch by correspondence. We had many of our dearest friends in common, notably James Smetham, and Mr. and Mrs. Fishwick Stead, of Southport, and this helped to unite us still more closely. We shared each other's joys and sorrows. He officiated at my marriage, and baptised more than one of my children; and when the end came for him, I ministered to him in his dying hours, and laid him to rest in the grave.

No two friendships, I suppose, are alike in their tone and complexion, in the elements they include, and the way those elements are combined. As between Mr. Akroyd and myself, though he was my senior, there was no great intellectual disparity. Our minds met on the level of genial equality. If one had precedence in this respect the other had it in that, and there was nothing to prevent perfect freedom of give and take in our intercourse with each other.

With Dr. W. B. Pope my relations were altogether different. Here was disparity not only of age but of attainments, of mental qualities, of character, and, above all, of spiritual stature. No weaker term than this last will suffice. He was a scholar who had pushed his studies into regions where I had not yet set foot ; a theologian who had taken his seat among the masters of sacred learning while I was still in *statu pupillari* ; and a saint who walked habitually on heights that I only saw from afar. I could not aspire to his friendship unless he showed in some way that it was waiting for me ; for he was a man on whom it was not possible to force intimacy. His manner, though not austere, had a certain reserve and at times a kind of far-awayness, as of one moving among objects visible to him but not to us from which he could not readily come down, and to which we could not easily rise. On my part the friendship began in reverence that was almost awe, ripening into admiration and affection ; on his, in the gradual opening of his mind to me on certain great subjects, and then on lesser and lighter ones, in which he revealed a gentle humour, and an almost childlike playfulness that seldom condensed into actual merriment but gleamed and flickered through his speech, or broke into a smile that meant more than most men's laughter.

He took an interest in my studies, and gave me many a suggestion and much encouragement. Sometimes I could follow him in all he said to me ; sometimes I could not, for there were times when he clean escaped me in the subtlety of his distinctions, carried, as it seemed to me, beyond the range of

our analytic faculties into spheres where analysis is no longer an effective instrument. But the atmosphere we breathed in these conversations—or rather monologues—in which he set free his highest thoughts, was itself an inspiration that moved and quickened my soul. When he was writing his “Compendium of Theology” he liked to take me with him for a walk and unburthen himself of the subject on which he was engaged, sometimes telling me of the rocks and shoals amid which he was labouring, and at others reporting that “the south wind blew softly,” and that he was under full sail. To him I owe my first real conceptions of systematic theology, of the relations, that is, existing between truths not only great in themselves, but so linked with other truths that they can be co-ordinated and shown as parts of a whole, each having its place in a divinely ordered economy which has assigned them their sphere and proportion. This study of the relation of the parts to the whole in God’s revelation of Himself and His redemption of man was peculiarly congenial to Dr. Pope’s mind, and as he opened his thoughts to me on the shore at Southport and in the lanes near Didsbury new and larger visions rose before me :

Then felt I like some watcher of the skies
When a new planet swims into his ken

Such companionship could not, at my impressionable age, be other than influential with me. For some time at least it affected my ideals as a preacher, though I soon discovered that his methods and style could not be mine. It gave me, however, a permanent distaste for certain pulpit vices

which I need not particularise, and left me with a high estimate of the value of their opposites. But the deepest impression my loved and honoured friend left upon me was that of his personal character. I have been associating with good men all my life, but I have met with none whose quality of goodness was quite like his, so exalted in its purity, so free from stain or defect, so constant in its reverence and humility. He seemed to me to live continually in the Divine Presence, only withdrawing his mind, as it were, from the contemplation of the Lord by a kind of effort when he had to meet the claim of some earthly duty, and returning to it again by the settled habit that had become his nature.

His interest in me did not slacken as the years advanced. He furthered my appointment as Fernley Lecturer in 1881, and was, I believe, responsible for the subject assigned to me; and I moved towards the office of Theological Tutor at Hands-worth, akin to that which he himself so long held at Didsbury, under his smile and benediction. In that office I used his *Compendium* as a textbook, and in doing so often recalled his discussions of it while it was yet in the making. It has its difficult passages, in which the fine-drawn argument is all but lost in the illimitable ether, and when questioned by a puzzled student I would sometimes reply, "Well, if I don't understand it nobody does," a cryptic saying that gave but moderate encouragement.

Dr. Pope lived to old age, but during the closing years his beautiful spirit was clouded and oppressed, and we gave thanks when he passed

to his congenial dwelling-place in the world of light.

To a few of the friends of my later life I may now refer. When I took up my duties at the Mission House in 1891, I found myself in close association with a number of ministers connected with various departments of the church to whom the Mission House was a common centre and frequent place of meeting. With most if not all of them I was already on friendly terms of acquaintance, and this naturally became more intimate. Of those still happily living it is not my present purpose to speak, but the greater number of them have passed away, and I may pay to their memory the tribute of affectionate mention. They were all men of some distinction in our church, and have left their mark upon it in various respects and in different degrees. I will not say they are fast being forgotten, but there is to me something pathetic in the way the waters close over the busy worker as soon as his work is done, and the footprints of those who come after efface those he had left "on the sands of time." So much the more would I, who have survived so many companions and friends, make kindly mention of them here.

The friend of earliest date whom I found settled in London was the Rev. W. J. Tweddle. I had known him almost from my boyhood, and had kept in touch with him ever since, so far as the conditions of our itinerant life allowed. He was a pleasant man to look at, and particularly pleasant to listen to. He had a beautiful voice, and used it well in the reading of the Scriptures and in the

delivery of his sermons, as I well remember from the days of my youth, when I frequently heard him preach. He was a north-country man, and the breath of the North in his voice gave distinctness to the sound of the "r" in words from which they of the Midlands and of the South often omit it. But these are little matters. It was the man himself whom his friends loved and prized—manly, sensible, and just in all his dealings, and tenaciously stedfast in his friendships. I hesitate to use the word "sweet" as an epithet appropriate to the qualities of a man—an epithet to which women have a prior if not exclusive claim; but there was a sweetness in Mr. Tweddle's smile that corresponded to the cheerful kindliness of his spirit and the warmth of his affection. Towards the end of his life he was an invalid and a sufferer, but the smile on the face and the sunshine in the heart were his to the last. He was one whom his friends cannot forget.

Another comely soul, lodged in a comely presence, was that of the Rev. Walford Green, the very embodiment of the paternal. Not only in his own large and happy family, but among his friends, and in the world generally so far as he had to do with it, his fatherliness of spirit and of manner were unmistakable. It was in his nature and found constant expression. It was the master spirit of his pastoral life. He cared for his people, sympathised with them, looked after them, and in his efforts for their welfare was often better to them than they were themselves. He had a tender heart, but not a weak one, for he had a strong sense of duty both for himself and for others,

and walked the narrow path of what was right, and helped others to do the same. In administration he had large experience, and brought patience, tact and good sense to bear on many a difficult situation. As President of the Conference, as chairman of a district, as treasurer of important connexional funds, he served his church well, and enjoyed unbounded confidence and esteem. But it was in his private life and personal friendships that the beauty and loveliness of his character were most fully seen, and it is here that my memory of him centres. To me, as to others, his friendship sweetened life. It was pleasant and good and wholesome, and when it had its earthly close I felt myself distinctly impoverished.

I could write in much the same strain of Dr. Waller, another distinguished official who served Methodism in many important departments of service, more particularly that of education. Here he was a great expert, familiar with the intricacies of education acts, and Government regulations, of boards, committees, and the complicated features of the education question, national and denominational. He was an efficient representative of his Church in these and kindred matters, and a *persona grata* with the officials with whom he had to do. But in his case again it is not of his public life that I think as I recall him. He was my friend for many years, a true and faithful friend, and we loved each other's company. We grew old together, and were conscious that we belonged to a generation that was passing away, to a comradeship that death was gradually dissolving. I remember him saying to me soon after the death

of one who was a common friend : " We must stand by one another, Mac ; we are the Old Guard, and there are not many of us left." Soon after this he himself was called, and as I think of him and others of the Old Guard, I am ready to say :

They are all gone into the world of light,
And I alone sit lingering here.

Of the little company of ministerial friends with whom I most associated, Dr. Rigg was for many years at once the head and the centre. To him we all looked up, and round him we seemed naturally to gather. He had few if any contemporaries left, and now sunned himself in the affection and esteem of a younger generation. His was a strongly marked personality, that of a man built large, and likely in any sphere of life to make himself felt. There was something massive in his bodily presence that corresponded with the weight of his character. He was well equipped as a student and a thinker, firm in his convictions, broad in his outlook, and masterly in the power with which he could either range over a wide field or concentrate upon a particular issue. He was a born debater, and long practice had made him a most effective one. He could, upon occasion, split a hair as well as most men, but his strength in debate did not lie in subtlety of reasoning and the arts that usually accompany it. It was his general mental vigour that made him formidable in discussion, his definiteness of aim, his courage and resoluteness ; and when he needs must fight, the broadsword, or even the battle-axe, suited his hand better than slenderer weapons. His power

of expressing himself, of saying what he had to say and saying it well, was equalled by few. I have been challenged for saying that I considered Dr. Rigg one of the most eloquent men I have listened to, and perhaps such an opinion needs explanation. No man cared less than he for the oratorical devices by which a speech may be made attractive in itself, apart from its subject and the ends it is intended to serve. He invariably spoke extempore, and I do not know that I ever heard from him a sentence which suggested that it had been framed beforehand to please the ear or gratify the fancy. But he spoke excellent English, neither slovenly nor inflated, but sound, clear, manly English, the fitting speech of a vigorous mind using language to express its thought and for no other purpose. And his sentences, not always short or of simple structure, came from his lips with such accuracy and finish that they might have been taken down verbatim and printed without correction. My experience of public speaking tells me that this is a rare gift, and if I describe him who possesses it as an eloquent man, I do not think I am misapplying the term.

His long—I might almost say lifelong—participation in debate had, perhaps, helped to develop a certain combativeness, or masterfulness, which was surely proper to his nature, an original element in its frame and constitution. He would not readily let facts, or alleged facts, go by unchallenged or unquestioned, and was on the lookout for the weak link in the chain of reasoning. Whether he knew it or not, he enjoyed discussion ; if genial and friendly, so much the better, and even if it

had not quite that character, there was that in him which warmed to it. And he liked to carry his point—I suppose we all do. In various respects he reminded me of Dr. Johnson. He required an opponent to call forth all his powers, and, like Johnson, he would cuff him heartily and bear no malice afterward. As I have listened to him in full heat of discussion, I think I have understood Boswell's reference to the "tossings" and "gorings" he received from his honoured friend; and there have been occasions that recalled to me Goldsmith's application to Johnson of a passage from one of Cibber's comedies: "When his pistol misses fire, he knocks you down with the butt-end of it." But he resembled Johnson still more closely in the tenderness of heart that lay beneath the sturdy qualities I have described.

I never really knew Dr. Rigg until, in 1891, I came into close relations with him at the Mission House, and by coming to reside on Streatham Hill became his neighbour. Previously I was somewhat afraid of him, and certainly never dreamt of anything that could be called personal friendship with him. But how soon was all this changed by intimacy when once it began! From the first he showed me kindness before which my fear of him rapidly passed away. One little incident, the memory of which I treasure, may here be mentioned. It revealed him to me in a new light, and changed my feelings towards him. We were sitting in committee, some half-dozen of us; I do not remember what our business was, nor does it matter. I had but recently come to London, and had not well settled to my new duties. My heart was still

sore at my sudden and unexpected transfer from a tutor's life at Handsworth to a secretary's life in London. I had been torn up by the roots, and had not yet taken fresh root in the new soil. I was much depressed, and I suppose my countenance showed it. Conversation in which I took no part was going on around the table, when a hand was laid gently on mine and Dr. Rigg whispered to me : " What is the matter, my dear ! " The words, the tone, brought the tears into my eyes. *My dear !* A man does not use a term like that to another man except in a moment of exceptional tenderness and sympathy. It was not merely the *vox humana*, but the *vox feminea*, of which in moments of deep feeling a note is sometimes heard from the lips of a man. I now heard it from one of the least effeminate of men. The words were commonplace enough, but they carried a message of affection, of concern for my trouble, and desire to help and comfort me that I can never forget. I date our friendship from that hour.

During the last few years of his life I saw much of him, and he grew in my estimation to the last. Strong natures ripen best. There is more for the softening influences of time and experience to work upon than is the case with weaker ones. He still reasoned with his old acuteness, though perhaps with not quite his former grasp of facts, and his primary convictions and main lines of thinking remained unaltered. He was a great Methodist ; by which I do not at all mean that he was bigoted, or narrow, or that Methodism so filled his field of vision that he had no eyes for anything else. He was very much the reverse of this. Few men who

are not churchmen had a higher and more generous estimate of the great qualities of the Church of England, or judged her history with less disposition to overlook its nobler aspects and emphasise its failings. Similarly, I may say, few men who are not dissenters saw more clearly than he what we owe to historic nonconformity for our civil and religious liberty, and for the maintenance of certain fundamental rights of the individual and spiritual life as against overstrained ecclesiastical authority. But his own soul's life was kindled and developed in Methodism. It gave him of its best, and he made it his own, intellectually, morally and spiritually ; and that not for his mere personal edification, but for life-long service in interpreting its principles and communicating its influence to others. No man in his time understood Methodism better, not only as a working system that he had a large share in administering, but as a spiritual force with a mission and a message of its own, a character and a genius, if I may so say, that enabled it to meet certain spiritual requirements of human nature, and to give emphasis to certain aspects of Christian truth that needed fresh presentation. He was for many years our chief authority on Methodist history and law, but he did not lose himself in these, or take them for more than they really are. He belonged, in a word, to that highest class of ecclesiastical statesmen who, while dealing continually with matters of polity and practice, have ever a clear vision of their church's spiritual calling, and of its relation to eternal things.

The personal piety of Dr. Rigg was that of a devout and humble soul—piety of the simple kind

that is not seldom found in strong men who have lived strenuous lives. The veteran soldier, the old sea-captain who has borne the buffetings of many a rough sea, is often a gentle-spirited man when you come to know him, and his faith as a Christian is rather that of the "little child," of which our Lord has spoken, than of the critic or the disputant. And this becomes more and more apparent as the time draws near when he prepares to say *Adsum* to the final call. It was so with my venerable friend :

This is the happy Warrior ; this is he
Whom every man in arms should wish to be.

The friendships of which I have here given some account have claimed mention as being among the influences by which my life has been affected. Perhaps they have influenced me more than I am aware of ; but in any case I must reckon them as having had some share in the formation of my character, and in giving to my life the direction and shape it has taken. Something like this, I imagine, would be true of most of us. Our friends live in us in various ways and in different degrees, so that if all we have received from them were withdrawn, what was left would hardly be recognisable by those who know us now, and would at least be a very different self from the actually existing one. I part with reluctance from this aspect of my life history which I have only been able to present imperfectly.

But a few words must be said of my friendships not only with individuals but with families, friendships that in many instances are in their second

and third generation. For there are families with which I have been happily associated for more than fifty years in intimacy that is hallowed by memories of former days, and is renewed and strengthened as we grow older. To these homes I have the passport that such friendship gives, with the right of sharing the joys and sorrows that come to them. The younger people know that I was the friend of their fathers and mothers before I was theirs ; that I remember those who have vanished from the family circle, and gave early welcome to those who were added to it ; and thus we are knit together by ties that have a certain sanctity. My intercourse with such families has been a chief source of happiness to me through life, and is so still ; and in my quiet hours I think with inexpressible tenderness of many households in which the best of human life is realised in the loyalties and affections of the home, and breathe benedictions and offer prayers that so it may continue.

Like most men of my age, I have now more friends beyond the veil than this side of it. At times I am touched with sadness at the thought, but

'Tis sweet, as year by year we lose
 Friends out of sight, in faith to muse
 How grows in Paradise our store.

CHAPTER XIV

To-day

Removal to Bournemouth—My Study and My Garden—Analysis of the Terms “ Supernumerary ” and “ Worn-out Minister ”—Late Reflections on Early Memories—Thoughts on Distinguished Men who Died in My Youth—Great Exhibition of 1851—Its Promise Unfulfilled—Succession of Wars—My Life as a Whole—My Present Faith—The Church and the Churches.

I HAVE reached the last chapter of these my memories. All writing of an autobiographical kind must necessarily be incomplete. Though it may be broken off wherever the writer pleases, it cannot be finished by him ; *Finis*, if written at all, must be written by another hand. What days or years may yet be in store for me “ belongs not to my care,” but I am nearing the end of my journey and my times are in His hand. If I am asked, “ Does the road wind uphill all the way ? ” I answer, “ No,” if that pathetic phrase implies hard climbing and a rough path ; for the goodness of God still gives me health and peace, mental life not perceptibly weakened, a loving family and faithful friends, with the happiness of quiet days and duties suited to my strength.

I have retired to a pleasant home on the south coast. Before coming here I had lived for six-and-twenty years in London, and had little thought of leaving it. To one who has lived long in London life elsewhere is apt to seem—I will not say not worth living, but a more or less shorn and attenu-

ated existence. I used to nod approval to Dr. Johnson's eulogy of London ending with the words, "There are my friends, there are my books, there are my amusements, and I hope still to keep my station there till God shall bid me go in peace."

Circumstances, however, combined to weaken and then to break the spell of life in London. One after another of my old friends passed away. Houses at whose doors "my heart was used to beat" were now empty, or were the homes of strangers. Companions in work and recreation were gone, and the conditions of my own life were altered. Most of my children now had homes of their own, and the house we had filled through so many years was large to the point of inconvenience for those of us who remained in it. Moreover, for two successive winters I had suffered from bronchial attacks, and my doctor advised removal to another climate and different surroundings; and as my strength and outdoor adventurousness diminished, the rush and hurry of the crowded streets, in which in more vigorous days I had taken pleasure, began to oppress me. Then came the disquieting air-raids, when night after night my household and I sought refuge in the cellar from the hostile bombs and friendly shrapnel that ranged above and around us. Everything seemed to suggest a change of residence. I succeeded in disposing of my house at Streatham Hill, and in finding one every way suitable for me at Bournemouth, whence I removed early in December, 1917, an arrangement that has more than justified itself in the improvement of my health and the quiet comfort of my daily life.

A great part of a minister's life is and ought to

be spent in his study. The effectiveness of his work largely depends upon the hours he spends there alone with himself, with his books and with God. No amount of natural readiness, of good-natured running about, or of laborious committee work will make up for the neglect of quiet hours of study and devotion ; and it will be his chief place of recreation, for in that matter he will do well to remember the claims of his mind as well as those of his body. I will write no word in disparagement of clerical golf and lawn tennis, but the intellect, the imagination, and the mental life generally need to be cheered, brightened and refreshed as surely as the physical powers need to be braced and reinvigorated. There is, I know, a possibility of the studious minister becoming too bookish " for human nature's daily food," but this danger may be set against that of the breezy parson becoming too breezy for those who would be glad to have a little more thought from him. Excess in either direction is, however, surely not difficult to avoid.

My present study is a room much to my mind, though I should be glad if it were a little larger. It does not hold all my books, but there are some fifteen hundred volumes around me as I write. It was a pleasing, anxious task to arrange them in their new home. I considered what I may call their feelings in giving them their places on the shelves, seeing to it that as far as possible they had the neighbour volumes to which they were accustomed. On the whole, they are grouped much as formerly, though in some instances I fear I have disturbed long and close associations. Still, they present much the same appearance as they

did before their removal from London, and the daily sight of them helps to preserve to me the continuity of life through all its changing scenes. This sense of continuity is also strengthened by sitting at the desk at which I have sat for many years, and by the familiar portraits on the wall of my father and grandfather. These seem to give me daily benediction, and as they look at me and I at them I often repeat the Virgilian line, "*Sequiturque patrem non passibus aequis*," knowing that while I have trodden the same path that they did, it has been with steps less strong and firm than theirs.

My window fronts a south-western sky and the light of setting suns—the calm, long-drawn sunsets of summer evenings, and the darker and more hurried ones of winter afternoons. Through a glass door I step into a garden, not a large one, but large enough, which is chiefly lawn surrounded by trees, with a few flower beds that just now are gay and beautiful in all the bravery of a sunny day in June. I have more time, and I think more disposition, to take pleasure in a garden of my own than I ever had before. Mine has been too hurrying a life for the development of that fine spirit of leisure which a garden breathes, and its true lover should possess. In all its sweet processes a garden refuses to be hurried. It makes haste slowly, and happily for itself and us it will not be hustled. To immediately awakened admiration it is comparatively indifferent, and never shows its best to the casual, quick-glancing visitor. But to the patient lover, to the observant, the quiet soul that can watch and wait and enter somewhat

into her mind, a garden has much to say and many things to show that are not said or shown to everyone. I am beginning to find that this is so, though I bring to my garden no such knowledge or skill as many men of my calling possess, and when retired from active life are able to employ. I cannot dig, and am not cunning with my hands, and half an hour's weeding makes a wreck of me ; but I think I understand the soul of a garden better than I did, and to feel for it in its travail and births, its ascending and descending scale of vitality. I count the buds on a standard rose, and share the emotion with which it seeks to bring them into flower. The blossom on my pear tree fills me with hope, and its failure to form the desired fruit suggests a fresh phase of the problem of evil. As also does the grub and insect question. When winter showed some signs of recognising that spring was a little overdue, I watched the first faint stirrings of new life in the leafless trees, and welcomed the tiny swellings on rind and bark that gave token of what was coming. And I learned to regret that I knew so little of nature and her ways, and have wished the ineffectual wish to have my time over again that I might make better acquaintance with earth and sky, with bird and beast, and with all things that grow, from the cedar that is in Lebanon to the hyssop that springeth out of the wall.

I am ready to believe with Wordsworth

that every flower
Enjoys the air it breathes,

and that there are modes of sentient life around us with which only at rare intervals have we any

communion ; or if I do not quite believe, I like to think it may be so. Last summer, it is hardly too much to say, I made friends with a climbing rose tree that grows against the outer wall of my study. I had come to its help against the green-fly that was teasing and distressing it, after which it appeared disposed for friendship. With one particular rose I had indeed a kind of flirtation. It grew so near my window that it could look in upon me, and seemed to like doing so. While yet a mere chit of a rosebud, as it swung in the breeze it would positively tap at my window, as much as to say :

Gather ye rosebuds while ye may,
Old Time is still a-flying :

and I would answer with :

Go, lovely Rose !
Tell her, that wastes her time and me. . . .

And when my flower-friend grew more sedate, and from a rosebud had become a matron rose, full-orbed and stately, she would still look kindly in at my window, bringing to my mind verse after verse from the rose anthology of English poetry, till the time came to sing for her the funeral hymn of all her tribe, the song of " The Last Rose of Summer."

To the cares and pleasures of the garden I have added those of a fowl-master, or clerk of the poultry, or hen-warden—the name of my office being still a matter of discussion. My friends laugh at me, and say " they hadn't thought to see me come to this," but I hold on, kept to it by its pains and pleasures, and for the sake of the discipline it

affords. I know what it is to return from the fowl-house egg-laden, and what it is to come back day after day empty-handed—these are the little ups and downs of life from which no one is exempt ; and what it is to have a sitting hen all at once grow tired of the sedentary life, leave her nest and a dozen addled eggs, and refuse to have anything more to do with them ; and what it is to chase a truant hen round the garden in my slippers through an hour of ineffectual effort to recapture her. All this and much more I know that I will not communicate to the reader lest it should discourage some possible *gallinarius*—an imposing Roman name for one who keep fowls. But my severest trials in this department of things have arisen from the defective moral qualities to be found in a hen-roost. Dr. Watts taught me when I was young to believe that “ birds in their little nests agree,” but if he includes the ordinary domestic fowl in this optimistic statement I reply confidently that they do not. And my knowledge on this subject is derived, I regret to say, from a particularly intimate acquaintance with the female fowl. For as soon as chickens of our rearing show themselves pronouncedly masculine they are deported, and mine remains an exclusively feminine establishment. The cock’s shrill clarion is never heard in it, his martial form and lordly step are never seen in it. In a word, my fowls are all hens. Are they therefore gentle in their manners one to another ? Are they kind ? Do they show politeness to each other ? Is there anything like “ After you, ma’am,” among them, or “ Excuse me,” or “ Don’t mention it ” in their daily manners ? No, there is nothing

of the kind. They are greedy and spiteful to the last degree. They snatch the food from one another, and quarrel and peck and persecute one another without limit. Let a hen return to her companions after a temporary absence, say, after hatching a brood of chickens, and she is worried and driven by the angry sisterhood till life is a burden to her. A strange fowl introduced into the pen is at once set upon in the most savage manner, and chickens, when big enough to join their elders, have a bitter time of it before their presence is forgiven. And these, it must be added, will heartily join in persecuting the next newcomers, and do to them in turn as they were done by. All the moral excellence of a hen is limited to her patient "sitting," and to her care for her chickens while they are dependent on her. As soon as they cease to be so, she has done with them, and they are no more to her than anything else that has feathers and goes on two legs.

My fowls interest and amuse me, but they also make me very angry. Tennyson's Northern Farmer was more than sweeping in his statement when he said, "The poor in a loomp is bad"; but if you say of the domestic hen that, though she is very useful and often beautiful, yet as regards her personal character she is greedy, selfish and cruel, you will be well within the mark. But though her faults are many, everlasting benediction is upon her: "As a hen doth gather her chickens under her wing." Let that be her defence.

I have now said enough about the little recreations for which I have found time since life was more leisurely with me. If apology for them be needed,

I may urge that the garden and the poultry-yard are not greatly demoralising in their influence, and after all belong rather to what is simple and primitive in human interests than to the artificial and the dissipating.

My official status, which has varied at different periods of my ministry, is now that of a supernumerary. That is a term which has in Methodism a precisely defined meaning. What an Emeritus Professor is to one who still holds a professorship, what a retired colonel or major is to one still on active service, or—if I may use so high-reaching a comparison—what an ex-Cabinet Minister is to one who is still a member of the Cabinet, such is a supernumerary minister to one who is in full work, whether it be that of a circuit or of a department. For nine years after retiring from office I did not take up my supernumeraryship in its proper, legal sense, being unwilling, for reasons of my own, to accept the retiring allowance which would then be my due. For the last five years, however, I have been a supernumerary in the full sense of the word. It is a designation that has never been quite to my liking—if I may say so—though I know the kindly sentiment that accompanies its use among us. But there are times when the suggestions offered by its etymology are somewhat depressing; for if you ask the word what it originally and really means, it will tell you frankly that it means “one above the number,” from which the transition to “one too many,” or “no longer wanted” is easy. I know that usage and not etymology finally determines the meaning of words, some of which that began badly having in course of

time become quite respectable, and others born, so to speak, in the purple, having moved steadily downward in all that they stand for. But after all a word never gets quite away from its origin, and occasionally recalls and reminds us of it. Hence it is that now and again, when for some reason or other he is not in the best of spirits, the supernumerary hears a whisper at his ear—"one above the number"—"one too many." If he be still sprightly in his old age—and we have known such—he may find spirit to reply: "But the Oxford Dictionary, best of all dictionaries, includes in its definition of supernumerary, 'A person who is engaged for odd jobs.' And did not I take the young minister's appointments last Sunday week, and indeed take the superintendent's pulpit on two Sundays while he was at Conference? How can a man be 'one too many' who can do odd jobs like these?"

But we are not always in this brisk and controversial mood, and there are times when those who have lived active and influential lives find a pathos in the word "supernumerary" that they do not care to explain, even to themselves.

I remember, too, that I have another designation: I am a "worn-out minister," so described in documents that are official and authoritative. There is a human, a sympathetic touch here that is wanting in the other, a half-expressed recognition of strength spent in labour, of a long journey wearing to its close. It suggests a grey head, a bowed form, and a step that moves more slowly than it used to do. It is undoubtedly a kindly phrase in its intention, though we have known it fall harshly

on a sensitive ear. In my own case I hope I may give it a cheery answer akin to that of the late Dr. M'Gregor, of Edinburgh, to the street-boy who called out to his companion, "Look, Sandy, there's a lame minister." "No, my lad," said M'Gregor, "*a lame man*—not a lame minister!" The distinction was good, and I am inclined to emphasise it. Whether a man is or is not a worn-out minister is not a question of age, or of his state of wind and limb, but of his mind and heart. As a minister he may be worn out while yet in the prime of life. If the passion of his calling has died out of him, if he has lost his hold of spiritual things, if he has ceased to read, and think, and is no longer a man of prayer, if pastoral sympathies have given place in him to worldly cares and motives, or to mere church business and politics, then, though the *man* may be young, he is a worn-out *minister*. That is his true description, I might say his epitaph. And to set against this, I have known men worn by age and sickness whose ministry of faith and love and spiritual wisdom was at its best, increasing in strength and beauty to its earthly close, worn-out men, but not, not worn-out ministers. When I would have the words "worn-out minister" illumined and exalted to me, I recall the old age of Thomas Jackson and William Arthur, of Dr. Rigg, of William M. Bunting, and David Hay, and many others, supernumeraries all of them, but not one a *worn-out minister*. And others there are now spending the evening of life in obscure places, out of the general sight and memory, of whom the same might be said. Perhaps these "worn-out ministers" are in the sight of God of great price,

and it may be that the ministry of their quiet goodness in old age is as acceptable to Him as the more active service of what would be called their best days.

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In recalling the past, and more particularly my very early days, I have had what is, I suppose, the common experience of finding the objects of memory seem at times quite near, and at others so distant that they might belong to another existence. There are moods, or frames of mind, or states of feeling in which it seems but the other day that I was a little child sitting on a footstool by my mother while she worked, or thrusting my hand into my father's that I might trot by his side down the street ; and again, it is all so long ago and so far away that it must have been in another world, so shadowy and intangible that perhaps it is a dream, and I myself am "such stuff as dreams are made on." Then events that as a matter of fact were contemporaneous or nearly so, leave very different impressions upon my mind as to their distance from me. They have no common chronological measure. Their nearness or their remoteness is not determined by their dates, but by their emotional quality and spiritual force. Events that have touched my imagination or deeply moved my feelings detach themselves from time and its orderly succession, and live with me in a timeless sphere where "a thousand years are as one day, and one day as a thousand years." Like other people, I do my ordinary business by the almanac and the clock, but the chronology of the inner life has other modes of measurement than that of

days and years. In that, our true essential life, the hours and the minutes are not of uniform length, but quite the contrary. Perhaps the Recording Angel does not deal in these at all, and past, present, and future do not mean the same things to him that they do to us. But the metaphysics of time are a sea that has engulfed more skilful mariners than I—why should I venture on it?

Among the events that impressed me when a child were the death of Sir Robert Peel in 1850, and that of the Duke of Wellington in 1852. I was touched with awe and a vague sense of trouble when I heard people whisper to each other, "Peel is dead," "the Duke is dead." I knew but little of the bearers of those illustrious names, except that Wellington had beaten Napoleon—whom we still called Bonaparte, or Boney—at Waterloo, and that Peel helped Queen Victoria to govern England; but that such great men should die oppressed my childish heart with thoughts that I could not put into words. Perhaps my feeling was akin to that of Wordsworth when hourly expecting news of the death of Fox:

A Power is passing from the earth
To breathless Nature's dark abyss.

I have always been moved by the death of public men, leaders of the world's life in religion, in politics, in literature or other great spheres of human interest. The passing from prominence and publicity into the seclusion of death, the "freezing at its source" of power that multitudes have felt, the silencing of voices to which the world has listened, the withdrawal from the scene of forms long conspicuous,

the coming down of the great ones of the earth to the common, lowly lot of a death-bed and a grave, affected me from my earliest days, and still affects me, with "thoughts that do often lie too deep for tears." When such tidings reach one they can hardly be taken in at first. They stun the mind by very intensity of feeling, and for a while, confuse and disable thought. Like a telegram that has to be read again and again before its meaning is grasped, the announcement of a great death cannot be read clear till repeated by one's self to one's self. I think I understand why, for days after Coleridge had passed away, Charles Lamb would suddenly say "Coleridge is dead;" and why the youthful Tennyson, on hearing of the death of Byron, carved on a rock near Somersby the words "Byron is dead," seeking thus to realise the loss that all but numbed his thought. "It was a day," he writes, "when the whole world seemed to be darkened for me." Children feel these things, not in the same way that grown-up people do, but sometimes with an even deeper sense of mystery and awe.

I am not now speaking of deaths that brought me personal bereavement and sorrow, but of those that moved me as one of the human fellowship with a sense of large and general loss. The death of Charles Dickens in 1870, of Tennyson in 1892, and of Gladstone in 1898, served to show that "we are a people yet," capable of common impulses of sorrow, of admiration and of love. And these common impulses are of immense value to our national life. Class-life, life that is sectional and sectarian, realises itself every day, but the great

sense of kinship in the nation's life is only awakened now and then in a people divided as we are by so many separating influences, social, political, and ecclesiastical. And it is seldom more impressively called out than by the death of some foremost man. The things that divide us are then, for the time at least, forgotten, and the things that make us one assert themselves, and make us greater and better than we were. It was good for England that for a generation or more we had all loved Dickens, and that when he died we knew that we did, and we showed it. And it was good for us that for more than a generation we had had among us a poet, a master of his art, singer, prophet and teacher, and when Tennyson was laid to rest in the Abbey, the heart of the nation was there to give thanks to the Giver and to him who was the gift.

On one occasion I had the opportunity of feeling the pulse of a foreign people as it throbbed on the burial day of a national poet. I was in the city of Milan in the summer of 1873, on the day of the funeral of Manzoni, the poet and novelist. The official attendants at the funeral included representatives of ecclesiastical, civil and military life, of the aristocracy and the Government. But what impressed me most was the manifestation of popular feeling. Southern people lend themselves more readily to procession and pageantry than we English do, to banner and music and song, and the expression of feeling in a picturesque and impassioned way. All this was to be seen—great crowds, orderly yet emotional, speeches in praise of the dead poet, the singing of his verses, pauses and silences, heads bared, and crossings and re-

ligious ceremony, and again the hum of thousands of voices, and the sharp cries of the street sellers of "*Vita e morte d'Alessandro Manzoni*." And he was not a king, or a statesman, or a victorious general, but a poet and a man of letters. Our English hero-worship, good and true as it may be, seldom finds popular expression in the case of a thinker or writer.

Among the deaths of notable persons that have moved me most, there are others that I may mention. When Thackeray was found dead in his bed on the morning of December 24th, 1863, the tidings as it ran through the country caused general sorrow. To me it was a painful shock. With no such commanding popularity as that of Dickens, and with a certain aloofness from the life and sentiment of the mass of the people, he had a powerful hold on the intellectual life of the country, more particularly on young men and women of fair education, who, while they found excellent fun in Dickens, found, or thought they found, in Thackeray more wisdom and knowledge. His "Newcomes" had enlisted me among his admirers, and I mourned his loss.

The death of the Prince Consort on December 14th, 1861, touched the heart of the entire nation. It was on a Saturday night that he passed away, and the news moved swiftly and silently through the country during the Sunday that followed, reaching many during the morning service in church and chapel. It was in chapel that I heard it. I well remember the official who brought the offertory plate to our pew whispering as he did so, "The Prince Consort is dead." The Prince

had passed through periods of unpopularity in the country, but that was over, and in his latest years he stood deservedly high in the general esteem. When, shortly after his death, Tennyson in his "Dedication" of the "Idylls of the King" to Queen Victoria, wrote of him—

We have lost him : he is gone :
We know him now : all narrow jealousies
Are silent ; and we see him as he moved,
How modest, kindly, all accomplish'd, wise
With what sublime repression of himself,

he spoke for us all. Soon after the "Dedication" appeared, I recited it in the Town Hall of Burslem to an audience that heard the lines with unmistakable emotion and approval, and so it was with the people generally.

When Lord Palmerston died in October, 1865, I felt a throb of the nation's regret at the passing away of one of its great sons. I have never been a close student of politics or an ardent follower of political leaders, regarding them from a distance with a certain amount of trust and distrust, distributed, I hope, judiciously. I could therefore at no time have given a reasoned opinion of Lord Palmerston's statesmanship, but I know that for years before he died he was looked upon as a national possession, as the embodiment of British qualities, and a kind of living tradition, connecting us with the days of Chatham and Pitt and Fox. Full of courage and of confidence in himself and in his country, buoyant, vivacious, very human and very English, though we were often angry with him he was a national favourite, and every one was sorry

to lose him. I was one of the many who were incompetent to judge in detail of the service or disservice he had rendered to his country ; but I felt that with him an old order of things was passing, and that new men, new measures, and possibly a new spirit might be looked for in our political life. And this gave me something to think of.

I have often puzzled myself over the question of a nation's great men, and sometimes over the preliminary question, who, or what, is a great man? though, on the whole, it may be better to leave such terms as "a great man" or a "man of genius" undefined than to entangle ourselves in definitions when we already know sufficiently well what we mean. We are all agreed that a clever man, or an able man, or an accomplished man is not the same thing as a great man ; that greatness is an attribute or quality of soul, of the essential personality of those in whom it is found ; and that while there may be touches of it in this man or that, those in whom it is the central characteristic are few at any time and in any country. I do not grudge the use of the epithet in a wider and lower sense, and would give the benefit of it to distinguished men of various kinds, so long as we preserve a high ideal of greatness, and give to it when it really comes amongst us the recognition it calls for.

Why are there not more of those who without reserve or qualification may be called great men? How little we know of the causes that produce them, and when they appear, how effectually they upset the theories by which we may seek to

account for such as they ! Who and what were the parents of Moses that they should have such a son ? Or of Saul of Tarsus ? Or of Dante ? Or of Shakespeare ? Why have so many families flowered in one supreme birth and never again, however kindly the seasons might be ? Who can tell us ? And again, why is there at one time an almost impatient fruitfulness of national life, an amazing growth of vigorous minds—poets, artists, statesmen, men of science—and at another time a general mediocrity rarely broken by anything that rises above the surrounding level ? I do not suggest that that is our condition at present, though I think it compares unfavourably with the state of things in the mid-Victorian period ; but assuredly the life of the nation would be much strengthened and refreshed by the presence among us of a greater number of men built large in heart and brain, men of commanding personality, round whom the intellectual and moral forces of the country could gather, and who would themselves be a source of inspiration to many. Leadership has always counted for much in the life of the church and of the nations, and we long for fresh instances of it of a high and noble sort in what is at present a somewhat discouraged world.

* * * * *

In the early days of my acquaintance with books I used to be irritated by the title given to certain biographies—"The Life and Times of—" this man or that. It had to my youthful apprehension a certain arrogance, as implying that the subject of the biography dominated the times in which he lived to a degree that made them *his*

times. And my unuttered comment was, "*His* times, forsooth! He belonged to them, not they to him!" But I have long since withdrawn this petulant comment, and read another meaning altogether in the words. The times in which each of us lives are *his* times—all the times he has: the rest is eternity. For the tremendous business of living his life every one of us has time assigned to him. Round him, as round their centre, move persons and things, events, opportunities, the powers of good and evil among which he is to act, acquire character, and make success or failure of earthly existence. That our neighbour is also the centre of a similar world in which he is on like probation does not alter for any of us the fact that the times we live in are our own, separately and individually, each man's school of discipline and field of labour, the place of birth and of burial assigned to him on earth. Perhaps the idea of collective life only belongs to our present stage of thought, and individual life is the only abiding reality—who knows?

The events of which I have been a spectator, nearer or more remote, have not been those of a dull or stagnant period of human history, but very much the reverse. There may have been centuries when the world was but "marking time," dreaming of the past, and waiting for the future; but that cannot be said of the century through three-fourths of which I have now lived. In the years of my boyhood the comfortable persuasion prevailed that the way to permanent prosperity and happiness now lay fairly open. Trade, more particularly Free Trade, the larger knowledge that science was bringing, popular education (not carried

too far), religion (also not carried too far, but kept within the limits of reason and respectability), and a moderately extended franchise—these would bring us, if not “all we ought to ask,” at least all we could expect in a world like this—after all, not so bad a world.

The Great Exhibition of 1851 gave new currency to the word “international,” and formal expression to the belief that war was wicked and—what was, perhaps, even more to the point—foolish and wasteful. At its opening Tennyson’s Ode was sung to the accompaniment of many trumpets :

From growing commerce loose her latest chain,
And let the fair, white-wing’d peacemaker fly
To happy havens under all the sky,
Till each man find his own in all men’s good,
And all men work in noble brotherhood,
Breaking their mailed fleets and armed towers,
And ruling by obeying Nature’s powers,
And gathering all the fruits of earth and crown’d with all
her flowers.

We have learnt since then—let us hope we have learnt—that self-interest, “enlightened self-interest” it is usually called, has little power to restrain the passions of nations and their rulers—ambition, covetousness, envy, and the like ; and that, in a word, though it is to all men’s earthly advantage to be good, that motive is altogether insufficient to make them so. Considerations of a higher and more spiritual nature are necessary.

Now, nearly seventy years after the singing of Tennyson’s Ode, we are feeling our way towards peace and goodwill after the most terrible war the

world has ever known, with, I hope and believe, diminished confidence in financial and commercial interests as the ultimate forces by which nations can be inspired or restrained, and with a growing conviction that God's laws of righteousness are the only sure foundation of human welfare, the only protection against the decline and fall of nations.

In them is plainly taught and easiest learnt
What makes a nation happy and keeps it so,
What ruins kingdoms and lays cities flat.

I had shared in my boyish way the hopes of which the Great Exhibition was a sort of symbol, and I have lived to be moved with feelings of sorrow and disappointment by the long succession of wars and accompanying distresses which began almost on the morrow of the festival in Hyde Park and has continued until now. First came the Crimean War in 1854. I was a schoolboy then, and was quite unconcerned as to the causes and motives of the war; but my blood tingled at mention of Alma and Inkerman, and with other "young barbarians," my schoolfellows, I shouted, cheered, and sang doggerel rhymes to the effect that General Liprandi

Fought Jack, Pat, and Sandy,
And a jolly good licking he got.

The Indian Mutiny in 1857 found me perhaps more than three years older in thought and feeling. With a boy of fifteen or sixteen years of age the inner life is often developing even faster than his bodily frame, and his sometimes awkward growing

limbs are an outward sign of a yet more rapid growth within, a growth usually healthy, even if for a while somewhat morbid and occasionally painful. The Mutiny year moved me to the depths with sorrow and pride, and with thoughts difficult to disentangle, so compounded were they of what I think was best in me and of what was not so good. I had tears of pity and tenderness for the women and children cruelly done to death, and sobs of admiration and delight for Colin Campbell, and the brothers Lawrence, and Nicholson, and Havelock and others who were not only great soldiers, but great and gentle souls in whom the best qualities of their race rose to unexpected heights of strength and beauty. As I read the story of Cawnpore, and Delhi, and Lucknow, and of the deeds of darkness and of light for which those names then stood, my own life seemed spiritless and unfruitful, and I yearned with vague desire to do something and to be something other than what I was and was doing, something that would give my life a touch of nobleness. As I have said, my desire was vague. It did not urge me to enlist as a soldier, but drew me generally and in a somewhat mystical way towards a life more influenced by the unseen and the eternal. I hope the emotions of those days were not allowed to run wholly to waste, but were transmuted and turned into channels where they might find, in however small degree, some real expression and result. But a part of the moral of it all to me is, that great events in the world's life, quite external to himself, may have unsuspected influence on a young mind, and be found after many days in character and in

aims that appear at first wholly unconnected with them. And this is a thought that I commend to others who may be able to see farther into it than I can.

Of the wars that have afflicted the world since the Indian Mutiny I need say little. They have their historians. The American Civil War, the Prusso-Austrian War, the Franco-German War, the Russo-Turkish War, the wars between Japan and China and between Japan and Russia, the Boer War, wars in the Balkans, in Egypt and the Sudan, and this latest war on land and sea over half the world, with larger sacrifice of life and greater destruction of the fruits of human labour, and heavier infliction of suffering on mankind than any previous war in which nations have engaged—what can I say of this that has not been already said, that we have not said to ourselves?

If things are to be as they have been, and on the ever-increasing scale which scientific and mechanical resources will ensure, I think it is clear that the human race is heading towards destruction, not local or particular but universal; a death akin to that which some men of science tell us is the destiny of the physical order of things in which we are set, when heat will be spent, and light will give place to darkness, and life will be no more in man or beast or plant or grass of the field. The yearning after a League of Nations that shall be able to say that war shall be no more, and see to it that it is so, may be a saving cry from the depth of our common humanity, or even a thought of God communicated to the soul of man. Should it be diverted or silenced, we may

be nearer the end of our civilisation and of many things beside, than this world dreams of.

* * * * *

Looking back upon my life as a whole, certain reflections present themselves to my mind which I may endeavour to describe.

Mine has been a happy life ; not that it has been without its cares, or free from losses and sorrows of which it is not needful now to speak. Some of these were short-lived, others have been softened or healed by time, and some few have left scars that I shall carry to the end. But I have been shielded throughout from the heavier calamities and distresses of life, and by the goodness of God and the kindness of my fellow-creatures I have enjoyed its chief blessings in their best and safest forms. The initial blessing of my life was my parentage, the benefit of which I feel still underlying and encircling it. My father and mother gave me a happy, wholesome childhood, nourishing in me all that was good and restraining what was evil. By their teaching, and even more by their example, they instilled in me certain principles that have never lost their hold, and set up for me certain way-marks of duty and conduct of which I have never wholly lost sight. Then I have been blessed with good health and a cheerful temperament, subject however to occasional waves of depression. My surroundings have usually been such as were pleasant to me, and my sense of humour has generally taken the edge off those that were not so pleasant. To the sports of boyhood and youth I was moderately inclined, but always found my chief recreation in books, to

which I had ready access. Then, in due course, came the pleasures of travel, varied and often renewed, to the refreshment of body and mind. My friendships have been through life a central element of my happiness, as I have before indicated, and these have been given me in generous measure. And I count myself fortunate that mine has been the *via media* in life. I have never known either the perils of riches or the ills of poverty. It may be that I overestimate the dangers of the one and the bitterness of the other, but with such light as I have on the subject I am thankful to have been spared them both.

But the supreme blessing of my life, compared with which all others are but small, has been the faith in God and in His Son which He has been pleased to give me. This record would be not only incomplete but untrue and misleading if I did not plainly say so. All other beliefs, all other hopes I cherish or have cherished are light matters, transient and unimportant compared with my faith in Christ, and the hope of eternal life in Him. This faith has linked my days and years together ; it touched and softened my heart as a child, and decided the course I took when I became a man ; it upheld me through strenuous years in which I often flagged but was not allowed utterly to fail ; it has given me a sufficient clue to life's meaning, so far interpreting its mysteries as to make them endurable, setting them in an atmosphere of light and love, and depriving them of their power to darken and oppress my soul ; and now in my old age it gives me peace and a spirit of patient waiting for that which is yet to be revealed. And in

this I find myself at one with all who really believe in Jesus Christ the Son of God, by whatever name they are called, and in whichever of His now separated flocks they are found.

And one thing more I wish to say. I recognise with thankfulness the continuity of my faith from its beginning until now. In many respects I have altered, and know that I have altered, in the course of the years. My views and opinions on many subjects have been modified, or the importance I attach to them is, in some cases, other than it was ; for the mind of a young man is not as that of a child, nor that of an old man as that of a young one. Time, experience, and observation, influences from without and developments within, tell upon us all and leave their mark. But through all this the life of faith may run its course unbroken, and preserve its identity from first to last. My spiritual life, with all its fluctuations and vicissitudes, has had no really new beginning since its birth. It has been a growth, now arrested and now renewed, a larger life developing from a smaller one whose beginning I can but faintly recall, if indeed I can at all recall it. Happily for me, I have not had the experience that many have had, of coming to the end of my early convictions and of feeling about for others to replace them. One reads of this in biographies that need not be quoted, and traces its results in writings with which most are familiar. The dropping of an old *Credo* and the search for a new one are painful processes, full of peril at the best, and I am thankful that I have not been subjected to them. My main beliefs are the development and expansion

of those I received in my childhood, and although that has not been my chief reason for holding to them, they are the more accredited to me as I "remember from whom I learned them." When I became a man I sought to "put away childish things," but I did not, and I do not now, count these beliefs among them. A child's belief in God the Father Almighty, and in Jesus Christ His only Son our Lord, in the forgiveness of sins, and the life everlasting, is not a childish thing, but rather a thing for the sake of which it is worth the strongest man's while to become a little child, for "of such is the Kingdom of God" ("The Realm of God belongs to such as these"—Moffatt).

But it is not by recalling my childhood, by any sentimental reviving of its visions, imaginings and beliefs, that I keep my hold of the Christian faith. It is my present faith, confirmed to me by many cumulative proofs, by much thought and study, deepened, and, if I may use the words, ripened and mellowed in me by the experience of a lifetime. The difference between a child's faith and that of a man is—to borrow terms of logic—not of *genus* but of *species*, not of kind but of stages of development. It is not an essential and fundamental difference, and in the last analysis it disappears altogether. Hence our Lord makes the faith of a little child the typical faith of the Christian. And we shall all do well to remember this.

Of the final triumph of the Kingdom of God amongst men I entertain no doubt. As the prophet Jeremiah bought the field at Anathoth while he himself was in prison at Jerusalem and the

whole land was held by the Chaldæan army, so sure was he that the invader would be driven back and the land be redeemed from the enemy by the hand of God, so my mind would be to buy beforehand any square mile of this sinful earth in full assurance that it will yet become a part of the inheritance of Christ.

And this carries with it my faith in the future of the Christian Church. I believe that it will fulfil the service and accomplish the ends for which it was called into existence. But it will not be the Church as we know it now. I do not take it upon me to forecast the changes that must take place in its at present conflicting aims and ideals, its various organisations and modes of working ; in the assertions, counter-assertions, and protests embodied in the different forms of polity, not always harmonious and often antagonistic, now found within it ; in the powers that it claims, and even more in the powers that it does *not* claim. Of these things I am at all times slow to speak, and shall not now discuss them. But as it is not likely that I shall have any part in the discussions and controversies that are surely coming, I will say emphatically that my confidence in the future of Christ's Church in its mystical unity and wholeness does not extend to the particular forms of order and organisation now existing. I do not regard them as final. Their tenure is leasehold rather than freehold, and in some instances the lease is perhaps nearer running out than the tenants are aware. Perhaps the changes that are sure to come will be pioneered and directed by ecclesiastical statesmen, and perhaps they will not.

This and the other "enabling" programme, or scheme of union, may help to shape the future of the Churches, but my own hope is rather in the spiritual forces that do not come "with observation," and in the unseen but ruling hand of Him who is "Head over all things to the Church which is His body."

Meanwhile, and always, there needs more *goodness* in the Churches. Nothing is so potent, so persuasive, so convincing, as goodness, and when it is more unmistakable in those who profess and call themselves Christians, Christianity will take a new hold upon the world, and at the same time readjust the affairs of her own household. There is little need for us to reproach one another. Self-reproach is more wholesome and more suited to the conditions of things all round. All the Churches have succeeded, to the extent of giving them a name and a place before God ; and all have failed, to a degree that calls for much humility, for the putting away of any such thought as "My Church is not as other Churches are," and for gentleness and forbearance in judging one another.

Personally, I have my preferences among the Church-systems now existing, some, for various reasons, being more to my mind than others. In some of them I think I could have lived and thriven ; in some I think I could not have done. But I have friends in almost all of them—Roman Catholics, Anglicans, Presbyterians, Methodists of more than one communion, Congregationalists, Baptists, and Quakers. I never engage in controversy with them, but, get once below the thin denominational surface to the real life, what good

and lovable men and women I have found among them ! How little the differences count for, and how much the oneness of the Christian life means !

But these divagations must end somewhere, and they shall end here, with a greeting and a good-bye to any reader who may have cared to follow the wanderings of my pen.

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